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Sommaire

Éditorial

Le comité de rédaction de la revue *Cliopsy* a le plaisir de présenter dans ce numéro un florilège des communications ayant eu lieu au colloque qui s'est tenu en décembre 2009 à Canterbury à l'université Christ Church à l'initiative de nos collègues de cette université, Linden West et Alan Bainbridge.

Ce colloque fut l'occasion de nouer des relations de coopération entre le réseau Cliopsy et les chercheurs réunis à cette occasion à Canterbury. Plusieurs rencontres à Paris et à Canterbury à la suite de ce premier contact ont permis d'apprendre à mieux identifier les contours de nos recherches et pratiques respectives, et plus précisément encore lors de la venue de Linden West en avril 2011 comme professeur invité à l'université Paris Ouest Nanterre.

Cette coopération se poursuivra notamment par nos participations respectives aux deux colloques en préparation : celui de Canterbury de mars 2012 et le 4e colloque Cliopsy prévu pour les 16 et 17 novembre 2012 à l'université Paris 8.

Ce numéro vient illustrer ces relations de coopération et nous offre la possibilité d'approcher certaines des démarches se référant à la psychanalyse dans les problématiques d'éducation, essentiellement dans le monde anglo-saxon. Le comité de rédaction a choisi de publier 14 articles (introduits par les organisateurs du colloque) dans la langue où ils ont été proposés, ceci afin de respecter les différences inévitables de sensibilités dues, entre autres, au contexte linguistique, ainsi qu'à l'histoire et à la place tant de la psychanalyse que des sciences de l'éducation dans les différents pays d'origine des auteurs. Pour les lecteurs moins familiers de la langue anglaise, des résumés en français les aideront dans leurs choix de lectures.

Avant de laisser la place à la véritable introduction de ce numéro thématique un peu « spécial », tant par la langue de publication que par la longueur des articles, rappelons qu'on trouvera également dans ce numéro les rubriques habituelles, recensions d'ouvrages et annonces de soutenances de thèses ou HDR et que la prochaine parution prévue pour le printemps 2012 contiendra des articles rassemblés sous forme de dossier sur *La question du groupe*, à la suite de notre appel à contributions.

Bonne lecture,

Le comité de rédaction

Making a case for the psychoanalytic study of education

Alan Bainbridge, Linden West

This special 6th edition of Cliopsy originates from a conference held at Canterbury Christ Church University, England, in December 2009. Diverse educators, psychotherapists and others – from the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, France, Italy, Turkey, South America and Australia - engaged in discussing the applications of psychoanalysis, broadly defined, to education, in its widest sense, across adult and lifelong learning, higher education as well as schooling. Such a project was not novel yet it should be noted that academic texts already related to this area could be counted in tens rather than hundreds (i.e. Appel (1999), Bibby (2011), Britzman (2009), Salzberger-Wittenberg et al. (1983) and Youell (2006)). It is also clear, at least, from a UK perspective and maybe more widely, that psychoanalytic thought, of whatever kind, has had relatively minimal presence, especially in recent years, in education and the broader education focussed academy. Indeed there is evidence of increasing hostility from many educators and academics towards its claims, aspirations and ways of knowing (Ecclestone and Hayes, (2009) and Furedi, (2009). What is disappointing about these attacks is how they demonstrate a lack of understanding of modern psychoanalytic thought and practice that is bundled up in the generic term of 'therapeutic education' (Bainbridge and West, in press).

The situation in other European countries, like France, may be marginally better. This is to a large extent due to an important tradition that has emerged in a number of universities of providing psychoanalytically informed 'clinical' workshops, in 'a Balint style', which focus on the experiences of professionals and counter-transference phenomena in locations like the classroom. This is accompanied by a focus on what is often termed the psychic qualities of such relationships, including with academic subjects themselves. This includes how subjects, like maths, or how these are to be taught, may have changed, bringing feelings of loss, even trauma in its wake, for particular teachers as cherished ways of communicating the roots of a discipline are declared to be anachronistic. Teachers in turn can act out with their pupils, in cynical and even, in terms of learning,

potentially destructive ways. The clinical tradition of intense focus on such processes is located in faculties of educational science and there is an associated body of research, using, for instance, in-depth observational methods, derived from the work of Esther Bick as well as group discussion (Chaussecourte, 2006). Yet, despite a considerable body of research and writing, under the umbrella of this journal, for instance, - academic educators like Claudine Blanchard-Laville and Phillipe Chaussecourte at Paris Nanterre and Bernard Pechberty at Université Paris 5 René Descartes - consider themselves to be increasingly marginal in the educational sciences. Notwithstanding, there is evidence from other continental European countries, of greater connectedness, relatively, between the worlds of education and psychoanalysis. This may be to do with the greater willingness in some continental academic traditions to engage philosophically with what can be seen as the rather speculative, self-referential, unobservable and not empirically testable world of psychoanalysis. There tends to be more scepticism in the Anglo-Saxon world where empiricism has been stronger. In Germany, for instance, the German Educational Research Association, unlike its British Educational Research Association counterpart, (BERA), has an interest group (Section 13.1: Psychoanalysis and Education) devoted to the psychoanalytic understanding of education and processes of learning.

Notwithstanding, the position overall, it seems, in many countries and cultures, is one in which psychoanalysis is neglected in education and its literatures, including adult and higher education. Moreover, those institutions in the United Kingdom, such as the Tavistock Clinic in London, that offer opportunities, to consider the emotional factors in learning and teaching, from a psychoanalytic perspective, are wrestling with pressures to offer more cognitive behaviourist approaches, given the support of government for these (on the grounds of them being shorter and thus less costly interventions and more susceptible to precise evaluation, as reported in discussions at the Conference). Cognitive behavioural approaches take less time for people to learn and are more easily manualised while their resonance, for educators, may be stronger given the dominance of cognitivist approaches in education. Also, to repeat, they appear more grounded in objectively measurable 'evidence-based' research findings, however questionable such research and the associated reductive stance towards complex psychic causalities of the interplay between interior and exterior worlds (Leader, 2011).

Education throughout the lifespan

We should make clear from the outset that these selected articles represent a perspective on education that is lifelong and lifewide. In fact we worried about the danger of a simplistic association between education and schools in planning the conference: the hegemonic language of education tends, still, to be synonymous with schooling and pedagogical interventions with children despite the growing importance of learning as a lifelong imperative (Jarvis, 2007). The worry was partly driven, in Linden's case, by a background of research in adult learning with a particular focus on transitional processes in higher education, professional life and informal learning. Such preoccupations can be marginal in the mainstream educational literature, given the preoccupation with schools and schooling (West, 1996; West, 2001; West, 2007; Merrill and West, 2009). We wanted to use the conference and the publications derived from this (Bainbridge and West, in press) to engage with education in the broader sense, without neglecting schools and the experiences of teachers and pupils. We wanted to include learning and educational processes in families, in relationships, in social, community, and professional contexts, at work as well as in higher education. Defining education more broadly, we thought, might help loosen up and energise discussion on its characteristics and purposes. This includes by making reference to the psychoanalytically informed research literature on adult and lifelong learning, which can bring into sharpened relief some of the damage done by schools in people's learning lives. Psychoanalytic assumptions, broadly applied, push us towards addressing many difficult questions, far beyond what can be a narrowly obsessive focus on accountability, 'standards' or curricula in schools. We are both Psychoanalytic Psychotherapists and have found that the language of psychoanalysis has opened up new possibilities in our research and teaching, in diverse contexts. It has enabled us to appreciate the complexity of experience – for adults, young people and children - and to view education as deeply embodied, alive with the play of phantasy, desire and resistance, across lives. It has enabled us to get beneath surface appearances, and sanitised, emotionally deadened accounts of learning, and to move towards potentially richer, deeper, whole person experiences and understanding: material that is redolent with vulnerability but also resilience in 'keeping on keeping on' as a teacher, an adult or young person.

Apprehensions

Therefore, a central preoccupation across the papers is the importance of

understanding the whole human being, the sentio as well as the cogito, the dynamics of inner/outer, the defended as well as social self, in education, across lives. And if there is some danger of pathologising learning and learners, in using psychoanalytic perspectives, there may be a greater one of sanitising education and how people experience it. Of, neglecting, in short, the experiential semantics of change, of negotiations of meaning and understanding, and of the internal conflicts that can be engendered; of movement and integration too, and the heroic dimensions of resilience – of learners keeping on keeping on - in difficult transitional processes, including mental ill health and or frightening economic instability. The neglect encompasses universities: especially alarming if, as in our own university, there is a prime preoccupation with the initial education and continuing development of diverse professionals such as teachers, social and health care workers. The gap between the lived experiences of would-be professionals, and the focus of their training, as chronicled in biographical narrative research, for instance, matters, sometimes dramatically, on a daily basis (Bainbridge, this volume; West, 2009). Even high achieving graduates can struggle, desperately, when working in difficult schools, faced as they may be, with disturbed, and disturbing, young people, or with social pathologies, like racism, finding their way into the heart of classrooms (West, 2009). The relative absence of psychoanalytic understanding means that such would-be professionals can be denied access to a whole repertoire of ideas and potential insights that could help them negotiate the messy swamp of classrooms, seminars, schools and colleges. It matters that those at the receiving end of 'education' - learners in schools, universities, adult education and diverse training contexts - may struggle confusedly in the relationships that are education, with relatively little help, when appropriate, or understanding of why (West, 2009). Psychoanalysis, however, takes these troubling aspects of experience seriously, concerned as it is with basic questions about the nature of the selves at the heart of learning and how a self comes to be, at all (Frosh, 1991). In such approaches, the emotional, inter- and intra-subjective, are given space while the more unconscious dimensions of learning are explored.

We were apprehensive about the initial conference for other reasons: how many delegates would we get in such times and what notions of 'education' might emerge? Ultimately the attendance exceeded our expectations with over 100 delegates presenting papers, coming, as noted, from all over Europe and beyond. And education was in fact conceived in the broadest terms, including in professional settings and lifelong contexts; and it was also viewed through the diverse modality lenses that psychoanalysis now

provides. We should emphasise here that psychoanalysis, like education, is a broad church, as the papers make clear. The success of the conference at Canterbury may indicate a desire to re-claim a space where the dynamic unconscious – which retains a central place in most theorising - provides a conceptual framework that is as valid as any dominant instrumentalist discourse. Significantly, the conference has already been a catalyst for a number of developments, including this present volume: for a major collaboration between Canterbury Christ Church University and colleagues in the Faculty of Education Sciences at Paris West University Nanterre La Défense. We both serve on the scientific committee of Cliopsy, while Linden has been Visiting Professor at Nanterre, and there is collaboration in doctoral student supervision and assessment.

Gaps between languages: getting lost in translation

We have struggled in all these developments with problems of language, and whose language to use. In the developing relationship between Canterbury Christ Church and Paris Nanterre, we often work in both French and English. There are many reasons, including an awareness of what can be lost in translation, alongside the cultural impoverishment of mono-lingualism and the importance of engaging with writers in their mother tongue. There are important academic reasons too: post-structuralist sensibilities have taught us how language is forged in and by culture, but also vice-versa. Language constitutes as well as represents 'reality'. The territory that is the preoccupation of psychoanalysis may, partly at least, be shaped by the very language used: and important expressions may not have an obvious equivalent. Words that seem so equivalent – like agency in English, and agence in French – can be troubling faux amis. In English the word can be used to denote small shifts in the experiencing self while the meaning in French is rather more mundane: to do with a place of business. We can struggle at times to find equivalent expressions (like pouvoir d'agir?). Managing such difficulties between languages, and in translation, has been a major editorial preoccupation in developing these papers as French, Italian and Turkish worlds have been re-presented within a world nuanced by the English language. This has meant giving many hours to exploring and negotiating meanings as well as to worrying about what might be lost in translation. Words matter: language is a prime means by which otherness, relationships as well as the law, in Lacan's sense, are mediated. However, difficulties can be negotiated as well as being problematic and the richness of what is offered derives as much as anything else from it being a product of an international collaboration.

What is presented then, in this special edition of Cliopsy, is a bricolage of an internationally informed academic exploration of a rich and diverse dialogue that is possible around education and psychoanalysis. In doing so we ask readers to be sensitive to the challenges of translation and how the worlds of others are interpreted and represented through a language that is not their own. We offer, at this stage, no overarching theories or synthesis of ideas. Instead, we seek to draw the readers' attention to the vibrant and authentic diversity of human educational experience, and its interpretation, presented here. If we are to make any claims, they are to show how psychoanalytic thinking can help make more sense of the complex inner/outer dialectic of education; of why education can be such a troublesome business; and of the importance of viewing education as lifelong and lifewide, as a site of a perpetual, deeply ambivalent struggle to be and to think.

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To Think or Not to Think

A Phenomenological and Psychoanalytic Perspective on Experience, Thinking and Creativity[1]

Lene Auestad

"Thoughts are a nuisance," says Bion's patient in *Learning from Experience;* "I don't want them" (1962b:34-35). "Thinking", writes Arendt in *The Life of the Mind,* is "equally dangerous to all creeds and, by itself, does not bring forth any new creed" ([1971]1977:176). Both these writers present theories of what thinking is, and about the risks associated with thinking; why we would sometimes not want to think. The purpose of this paper is to question how 'learning', conceived not as mechanical reproduction but as a process of creative engagement with the material, comes about, using Arendt's philosophical account of thinking and Bion's psychoanalytic account. They both illuminate how thinking is *not* a necessary component of a human life, though it would be a poor one without it, how it has the potential to undermine the existing social and mental frameworks on which we rely for support, and how thinking, as an activity arising out of experience, depends on some social conditions for its existence.

To explore this theme, I shall first present two pre-psychoanalytic tales which have been central to psychoanalytic thinking, Hoffmann's story of *The Sandman*, as read by Rand and Torok, and Sophocles' *King Oedipus*, primarily as seen by Bion. In these interpretations, both the play and the fairy tale are concerned with the theme of inquiry and its potential dangers.

The Sandman

In Hoffmann's fairy tale *The Sandman* (1816), which forms the basis for Freud's essay *The Uncanny* (1919), the harmony of Nathaniel's family is disturbed on evenings when his father receives an unknown visitor, and the children are rushed to bed, being told that the Sandman is coming. The answers the hero receives to his questions about the Sandman's identity do not satisfy him, and, hiding in his father's room, he discovers that the visitor is the lawyer Coppelius, a family friend feared and hated by the mother and children and treated with admiring subservience by the father. The two men perform some mysterious work involving a fire, and when Nathaniel is discovered, Coppelius wants to throw burning coals into the boy's eyes, but his father intervenes and prevents it (Hoffmann 1816).

In Rand and Torok's re-interpretation of the nature of the uncanny, based on their reading of Hoffman's story, damage to the eyes, rather than providing an image of castration, represents an epistemic loss (1994:188). The

authors' emphasis is on the effects of secrecy in the family, which "disrupts the intimacy and familiarity of the home" (1994:189). When attempting to ask about the Sandman, Nathaniel is told by his mother: "When I tell you that the Sandman is coming, it only means that you are sleepy and can't keep your eyes open any longer, as though someone had sprinkled sand into them" (1994:193). His sister's nurse, on the other hand, informs him that the Sandman "is a wicked man who comes to children when they refuse to go to bed and throws handfuls of sand in their eyes till they bleed and pop out of their heads" (1994:193). The point is that the mother's and nurse's explanations reveal the element of wilful deception involved in their own stories: "The expression they use "to throw sand in someone's eyes" (*Sand in die Augen streuen*) is the German equivalent for the English "to throw dust in someone's eyes", meaning to mislead, to dupe or trick" (1994:194,196).

As the story evolves, Nathaniel falls madly in love with the doll Olympia, thus failing to realize that she is a piece of mechanical clockwork rather than a human being. As in his childhood the hero is deprived of the insight those around him possess. The implied threat in the nurse's story: "if you try to look, you will be blinded" (1994:196) is in the end made true as Nathaniel's search for the truth ends in madness and he throws himself from a tower whilst in a delusional state. In Rand and Torok's interpretation (1994:198), the figure of the Sandman stands both for the ongoing fraudulent activity in the family and for the fact that its existence is covered up.

Freud stated that the uncanny is something 'familiar and old-established in the mind which has become alienated from it through the process of repression' (1919:241). Rand and Torok's argument is that *The Sandman* provides a less than perfect illustration of Freud's thesis. In Hoffmann's story the uncanny is not the return of something Nathanael himself has repressed, but the return of the secrets his family has kept from him (1994:202). We should think of repression here as happening primarily on a social level.

King Oedipus

In Bion's reading of the Oedipus myth the hero's persistent search to discover the truth is the core of the story. Oedipus "represents the triumph of determined curiosity over intimidation and may thus be used as a symbol for scientific integrity" (1963:49). Bion draws a parallel between this narrative and those of the Garden of Eden and the Tower of Babel – curiosity, in all these stories, has the status of transgression; it amounts to encroaching upon the territory of the gods: "The punishment in Eden is expulsion from the garden: in the Babel story the integrity of the language is destroyed […]. The exile theme common to both stories is discernible in the exile of Oedipus" (1963:82-83).

Inquiry, in all these instances, is associated with potential danger. In the Oedipus myth the hero's inquiry is about himself. The riddle posed by the Sphinx, a creature who in its sexual ambiguity can be seen as representing both his parents, is about the nature of man, and the answer to Oedipus' questions about the cause of the plague and the identity of the murderer of King Laius is no other than the questioner (see also Shengold 1989). Originally Egyptian, the Sphinx as presented in this story is known from the legends of Oedipus, occurring in tragedies from the fifth century (March 2008:272). As a divine creature, it was arrogant in its certainty that a mere human would be incapable of grasping his own nature, of knowing himself, but the story differs from the biblical myths in that Oedipus is victorious.

There is an ambiguity in the story about whether knowledge is good or bad – on the one hand we witness a victory of reason; the sphinx who simply dissolves once its secret has been discovered – on the other hand there is the presence of the notion that insight into the true state of affairs may be too devastating to bear. The end of the story, where Oedipus blinds himself, is interpreted by Steiner (1985) along these lines, as an instance of self-mutilation signifying a shedding away from the truth. The truth is too gruesome to face, and he pokes his eyes out so as not to have to see it. In this version, the story echoes the theme of the nurse's prophesy in *The Sandman:* "Do not look, or you will be blinded." But the ending may also be interpreted differently, more in line with the symbolic significance of blindness in antiquity; in poking his eyes out, Oedipus becomes like the blind seer Tiresias. He may be regarded as having abandoned the world of appearances in favour of the world of spiritual truth, thus no longer being prey to the deceptive theatre presented to his senses.

To Oedipus' crucial question: "Who among mortals made me?" Tiresias responds; "This very day will make and then dissolve you" (Sophocles [429] 2004:63). This is a repetition of his earlier question to the oracle before leaving Corinth, where the response did not state the identity of his parents, but instead told him the prophesy that he would kill his father and marry his mother. Precisely because he leaves Corinth in an attempt to avoid fulfilling the prophesy, he walks right into the trap set up for him by the gods.

Tiresias, like the gods, knows what is going to happen. But the gods, being immortal and invulnerable, are not in a position to empathise with human beings. Oedipus is acquainted with some of the facts, but he fails to understand them before it is too late. The situation can be compared to Bion's (1963:50) example of reversible perspective drawings, where the perceivers look at the same thing and yet see two different things. The image can be used to illustrate the distinction between meaning and truth. There is the perspective of the eternal truth of the gods, and there is the meaning of the event to human beings. The human spectators, fallible interpreters endowed with character flaws, neither omnipotent nor omniscient, are able to grieve for the fate of the hero, which could have been their own.

Arendt on thinking

The depiction in the stories of the Sandman and of Oedipus of thinking and inquiry as potentially dangerous activities strikes a theme that has intrigued psychoanalysts. Yet if thinking is not clearly distinguished from an instrumental activity, this point is easily missed entirely. Conceived as an activity of radical questioning, its potential becomes clearer.

In thinking, states Arendt, I am 'two-in-one' – I am conducting a dialogue with myself, but it is a dialogue in which other people are represented (1951:476). Hence thinking presupposes the human condition of plurality. This is not the case with what she calls cognition and logical reasoning, as these activities can be performed by 'Man in the singular'. Thought is distinguished from cognition by the fact that it has no utility function; it has neither an end nor an aim outside itself.

Cognition, on the contrary, always pursues a definite aim, and it comes to an end once this result is achieved. It is the intellectual work of fabrication, including those of science and of workmanship ([1958]1988:170-171). Thus Arendt does not identify 'thinking' with specific professions or layers in society; "inability to think," she writes, "is not a failing of the many who lack brain power but an ever-present possibility for everybody – scientists, scholars, and other specialists in mental enterprises not excluded" ([1971]1977:191).

Arendt distinguishes logical reasoning from both thought and cognition. Deductions from axiomatic statements and the subsuming of particular instances under general rules are activities which obey the laws of logic. Hence they are characterized by a total absence of freedom; logical laws, to the mind, carry the same force of compulsion as do natural laws to the body. Arendt equates logical reasoning with "brain power" or "intelligence" ([1958]1988:171), thus an inability to think is distinct from a lack of intelligence (1971:423).

Reason, to Arendt, seeks meaning rather than truth. Taking over from Kant the distinction between reason *(Vernunft)* and the intellect *(Verstand)*, she declares that thinking, belonging to the faculty of reason, is inspired not by the quest for truth, but by the quest for meaning (1977:14-15). Questions of truth are answered by the evidence provided by the common sense which belongs to the realm of appearances. Questions about meaning, to the contrary (1977:57-59), are meaningless to common sense, since common sense makes us feel at home in the world so that we feel no need to question what appears in it.

Yet, thinking has one characteristic in common with action, namely freedom. Arendt states that "both action and thought occur in the form of movement and […] freedom underlies both: freedom of movement" (1968:9). Thinking, although it cannot replace action, is another way of moving in the world of freedom.

Thinking is a state of inner plurality, in which I have a conversation with

myself. In loneliness this two-in-one collapses into one; it is a state of being one person deserted by all the others (1951:476). "Man loses trust in himself as the partner of his thoughts" and the confidence in the world required for experience (1951:477).

This is a description of what takes place in totalitarian societies. Whereas tyrannies, to Arendt, destroy the public sphere and thus the capacity for action, totalitarian states destroy the private sphere as well and thus ruin the capacity for thought. If we imagine a state of affairs where the neighbour has suddenly disappeared, and everyone knows, seemingly instinctively, that they are not to ask any questions, to proceed as if nothing ever happened, and pretend that he or she never existed, we can begin to discern the outlines of a situation where fear is instigated as an attack on thought, memory, curiosity, imagination, creativity – or mental freedom. An internalization of coercion takes place, based on the feeling that some things are too dangerous to be thought about. Thus creativity is severely restrained – one's thoughts can no longer move around freely for fear of what they might encounter. Prevented from receiving confirmation from others, one is put in a state where one's senses become untrustworthy. "Even the experience of the materially and sensually given world," writes Arendt, depends on contact with others, "without which each of us would be enclosed in his own particularity of sense data" (1951:475-476). "Only because […] not one man, but men in the plural inhabit the earth can we trust our immediate sensual experience" (476).

Hoffmann's story of Nathanael can be read as an expression of a similar totalitarian situation in the family. The hero's attempts to inquire are answered with threats; 'Do not ask questions, or else…', and his understanding is thwarted. His senses fail him, and he is drawn into a land of shadows, unable to distinguish deceit, in the shape of the doll Olympia, from the real and genuine, embodied by his human fiancée Clara. Since this is a gothic fairy tale, no path proceeds towards enlightenment; the reader is left more or less in the same position as its hero, unable to draw a clear line between his hallucinations and what is objectively happening.

Experience and thinking are undermined when human beings are prevented from engaging in meaningful contact with others. Arendt's account of totalitarianism is not just intended as a historical description. It ends on a note of warning, stating that in a social situation where people are made superfluous as human beings, when they are placed outside of a context where they can exchange opinions, exercise judgement and act together with others, a totalitarian temptation is created. When meaning is not upheld interpersonally, the world becomes inhuman, like a desert, from which ideology may provide an escape, appearing "like a last support in a world where nobody is reliable and nothing can be relied upon" (1951:478).

Bion on thinking

Like the bird-mother who feeds the baby bird with food she has digested, Bion's mother nurtures her infant with digested experience, leading to the growth of an ability to think. While Arendt dwells on the necessity of a space *between* people for meaning and thinking, Bion elaborates on the requirement of an inner space and on the presence of a receptive other. They both convey how assigning meaning to experience, in the intimate sphere as in the public sphere, rests on a joint effort. The starting point for both these paths of reflection is how meaning is destroyed, in Arendt's case from without through the collapse of a public space and in Bion's case from within. These seemingly similar processes are intertwined. It is interesting to note that Freud, when explaining the concept of the censor, employs the example of political censorship in Russia: "Where can we find a similar distortion of a psychical act in social life? Only where two persons are concerned, one of whom possesses a certain degree of power which the second is obliged to take into account. […] This censorship acts exactly like the censorship of newspapers at the Russian frontier, which allows foreign journals to fall into the hands of the readers […] only after a quantity of passages have been blacked out". (Freud 1900:141-142, 529)

Freud is in effect saying 'take this political phenomenon of tyranny, and try to imagine it as taking place on an individual level.' Bion's further development, his theory of containment, articulates how meaning, thinking and subjectivity originate in an interpersonal constellation; the mother lets the infant "project a feeling, say, that it is dying" and "reintroject it after its sojourn in the breast has made it tolerable to the infant psyche" (1962a:116). However, "if the projection is not accepted […] its feeling that it is dying is stripped of such meaning as it has", thus it "reintrojects, not a fear of dying made tolerable, but a nameless dread" (1962a:116). Bion's description of nameless dread goes further than Freud in conceiving of how the social reaches into the soul of the individual. Not only is meaning distorted and covered up; it is thoroughly destroyed. The object of refuted containment has become meaningless, indigestible, that-which-cannot-be-thought. Bion's analogy of witnessing not so much the remnants of a past civilization as a primitive catastrophe (1957:88) paralleled the political situation that gave rise to Arendt's thought, where human beings had not simply been killed on a massive scale, but an attempt had been made to destroy their humanity beforehand and to eradicate the memory of them in the aftermath. The situation was one in which one could not simply pick up the pieces of past Western thought and gather them together again; a thorough effort at re-thinking was required.

Thinking and experience

Psychoanalysis can be seen as an effort to reinstall or recreate meaning, to

think about the unthinkable. But as a conceptual scheme, it is also socially determined. This means that it is guided by power structures, as we saw in the quote by Freud, but another point in the context of thinking is that as long as you are operating within a conceptual scheme, you are making sense, but once you start testing the limits of that conceptual scheme, you risk meaninglessness.

Thinking is, as we have seen, essentially disruptive. It "brings out the implications of unexamined opinions and thereby destroys them", thus it liberates the faculty of judgement. It has a political function only in times of crisis; "When […] those who think are drawn out of hiding because their refusal to join is conspicuous" ([1971]1977:192). The story of Anton Schmidt, a sergeant in the German Army, who supplied the Jewish underground in Poland with forged papers and military trucks until he was arrested and executed, shows that "under conditions of terror most people will comply but *some people will not*" ([1963]1994:231-233). Examples that such actions are possible are needed for the worldly preservation of meaning.

The stories of thinking that interest Bion – the Garden of Eden, the Tower of Babel and the myth of Oedipus – all end in expulsion, pointing towards his interest in the potentially stifling quality of the group. Arendt's ideal type, Socrates, the thinker *par excellence*, was, as we know, finally executed for corrupting the youth of Athens. Yet his example is two-sided as his thinking was always dialogical; he always thought *with* someone, yet he was also got rid of by the community.

A twofold quality can be discerned in teaching and learning as well. In acquiring a conceptual scheme one is enriched with a capacity to experience reality through its concepts, but the process also serves to set up a barrier against that which cannot be grasped through them. Thus in teaching someone a conceptual scheme one is also teaching them where not to look. One is simultaneously, to a greater or lesser extent, saying: "We will throw sand into your eyes".

To appeal to Arendt's clarifying distinctions, cognition can be taught, but thinking cannot. Thinking cannot be copied, or passed on like a piece of knowledge, only inspired. Around the age of 14 I had a teacher who, in the context of speaking about the French Revolution started asking: 'What are the preconditions required for a revolution to take place?'. Rather than saying 'this is the truth because it says so in the book', he was taking a step back and wondering why. This was a revelatory experience to me, where I thought: 'he is standing up there and actually thinking'. In doing so, he was creating a space in which such activity could take place.

Finally, I have aimed to imply that Arendt has something essential to add to an idea of containment extended in a social sense, namely an epistemic point about perspectival plurality. A distinct humanism inheres in her emphasis on the irreducibility of the different positions people occupy and the potential for extended vision each participant's perspective lends to all.

According to Hecht, the translator of *King Oedipus*, the hero is the person to whom the riddle of the sphinx does not apply. Having had his feet pinned together as an infant, Oedipus was in fact handicapped; he never walked upright on his own two feet without the support of a walking stick (2004). An Arendtian interpretation of this fact could be that the specific place in the world he occupied as a result of his deformation allowed him to see what all the others overlooked. What to everyone else would be too obvious to notice, walking upright and unsupported, was not obvious to him, thus he was the only one capable of guessing the riddle.

Whether a teacher is capable of taking up a perspective that comes from the sideline – in terms of culture, class, gender etc. – depends, I think, jointly on a basic security and a willingness to take a risk. Bion's concepts illuminate how this security is an unconscious state of affairs and how it is unconsciously communicated. The element of courage required to put one's concepts into play and risk one's frameworks of support is fruitfully explored in Arendt's political existentialism.

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Beginning teaching:
the theory/practice divide

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Teacher education, has for many years, discussed the importance of the role of either practical experience or theoretical insight, into how beginning teachers develop an understanding of their professional practice. Reviews of research over the last four decades (Fuller and Brown, 1975; Kagan, 1992; Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon, 1998; Cameron and Bake, 2004; Korthagen, Loughran and Russell 2006; Webster-Wright, 2009) have revealed commonalities in the early career development of beginning teachers. These highlight a preference for practical experience in the work place and the tendency for student teachers to reject or not engage with the knowledge base of their chosen profession. Gardner (1994) refers to this period rather eloquently as a 'furor to teach', where knowledge is actively rejected and only practical experience is seen to have value.

Further to this, Fuller and Brown (1975), Darling-Hammond (2000), Kagan (1992) and Webster-Wright (2009) have shown that it can take up to three to five years before there is a desire to consider theoretical aspects. Kagan (1992) also makes it clear how student teachers regard the learning of skills during their early practical experiences as far more vital than considering theory as they focus on classroom control and their own teaching performance (see also Fuller and Brown, 1975). Ritchie and Wilson (2001) warn against the seductive nature of early practical experiences as such times can elicit powerful feelings in relation to what is happening in the present. So much so, that either theoretical explanations or other possible interpretations are refuted in favour of the personal reaction to and explanation of the present situation.

Encountering professional knowledge:

It is difficult in this paper to represent the vast array of teacher education/training programmes on offer in the UK but what can be reliably confirmed from each of the main research reviews, is that the dominant mode of delivery is still the 'traditional' transmission of knowledge. Such approaches are agreed to tend towards the 'training' of educational professionals rather than providing a more open discursive process of education. Johnson and Golombek (2002) claim the transmission of knowledge diminishes and marginalises those being trained by ignoring what each individual brings to their new (professional) experiences. There is an

assumption that all trainees start from the same position (Ritchie and Wilson, 2001) and Korthagen et al. (2006) doubt whether it is possible to 'bestow' knowledge and therefore create a subject/pedagogy. For Segall (2001) this is a worrying situation as it tends towards preserving the old established knowledge and prevents new ideas from emerging. Felman (1982) confirms this view and asserts that the content of pedagogical knowledge for teachers is less important than developing their own disposition to learn.

Cameron and Baker (2004) question with some justified pessimism whether, due to the complexity, workplace experience can become a site for real (professional) learning but recognise that it is during these encounters that new professionals begin to explore their working environment. Throughout this time their life experiences and the subsequent expectations of the new role are seen to encounter the reality of professional practice. The personal nature of this encounter makes the experience distinctive and important. Connelly and Clandinin (1988) describe this situation as having the effect of 'pulling out' what they refer to as personal practical knowledge. By which they infer that the professional skills employed and the knowledge that is developed are determined in conjunction with the personal experiences that have been brought to the present professional situation.

The interaction between the past and the present is at the very heart of an early student teacher experience, that is concerned with 'doing what a professional should be doing' but at this early stage it is situated within what the student brings from their past and what experience and advice they receive in the present. Jalongo and Isenberg (1995) note that it is only possible to build on what is already known and so it should be no surprise that the responses during this time are correlated to past experiences. Research into the career pathways of teachers confirms this relationship, for example Huberman (1995) noted how easy or painful early careers could be related to earlier life experiences. The continuity of building on past experience is for Clandinin and Connelly (2000), the underlying fundamental process in developing a professional practice. They see the early practical experience, as one in which new knowledge and skills can be developed in the professional and social world that is now being lived. What is of significance to this debate is how this encounter impacts on the development of professional knowledge. The findings of Darling-Hammond, (2000); Elbaz, (1997); Fuller and Brown, (1975); Kagan, (1992) and Moore, (2006) suggest that individual dispositions may have an impact on how both professional knowledge and skills are derived and that it can realistically take up to five years before there is an effective encounter with knowledge. It is therefore worth considering how individuals relate to knowledge and the role this plays during the early stages of their career.

Relationship with knowledge - a psychodynamic view:

It will be argued that an understanding of the dynamic unconscious provides helpful insight into what has been shown to be a fundamentally personal encounter with professional knowledge during early practical experience. Psychodynamic theory considers how mental processes become established due to the interaction between an internal (unconscious) dynamic and the external world. This analysis will be mainly situated within an object relations modality as it provides a particularly pertinent framework, where the central premise recognises the importance of relationships and the interaction between the individual and environment. For example, Fairbairn (1952) illustrates how the experience of real or phantasised relationships with external objects can become assimilated as internal objects. These internalised object relationships now become the basis for the personality of individuals and to a large extent can influence future thinking and patterns of relating with others.

As the new professional struggles with understanding their developing practice, so this induces memories of the psychological work required during early learning experiences and subsequently enhances emotional responses. This playing out of the past in the present corresponds to the fundamental psychodynamic phenomenon of the transference where early object relationships have been internalised and then serve as templates for similar relationships experienced in the present. For example, Lucy had entered the education profession as a Teaching Assistant and in her interviews with me it became clear how her past 'cast a shadow' over the present. Lucy had been a rebel in her school days; she shunned academic study in favour of sports and her disruptive behaviour often got her into trouble. Then, in her early 30's, Lucy returned to work in a school and began to re-create these past dramas. As a member of staff she rebelled against the 'unsuitable' curriculum and found it difficult to support the school rules and finally resigned. After this she took on a role working with excluded pupils and found this to be an environment she was able to function in. The suggestion here is that early relationships, both with those in education and the process of education itself has provided an internal representation that is evoked again, in the transference, as the new professional seeks to develop their practice. This, of course, would also account for the much reported preference towards personal experience rather than theoretical insight as becoming an educational professional is a profoundly unique and personal encounter.

Psychodynamic theory supports this assertion, as it is widely acknowledged that the relationship between internal and external objects is initially best explored experientially, given it involves feelings and emotions, before becoming cognitively and consciously known and understood. For example, Mahler, Pine and Bergman (1975), all proposed that the infant develops an early internal representation of the relationship between themselves and the external primary care-giver and that understanding is pre-verbal and

informed by feeling states relating, for example, to containment or abandonment. In fact Bollas (1987) describes this as an 'unthought known'. Significantly this knowing casts a shadow of the internalized object, the mother, on future relationships such as Lucy's unsure and rebellious relationship with education.

Britzman (2005) acknowledges the difficulty in engaging with professional knowledge, for just like an infant the new professional has to encounter the experience before they become competent and have an understanding of their situation. Learning about the professional world requires the personal and professional, the imaginary and the real to be successfully negotiated. The personal knowledge that is brought to the profession is effused with expectation and anticipations and Britzman (2003) argues that these will be used to defend against the complex and uncertain world of working in educational settings. Thus making it challenging to accept and engage with professional learning as this would mean that already established views had to be abandoned.

Bion (1985) contends that understanding how groups function requires a war metaphor, where the individual is always battling to maintain their sense of self and avoid being overwhelmed by the majority. In the context of the beginning teacher such a battle can be envisaged between the knowledge that is brought to the professional setting as a result of personal experience and the knowledge that is being promulgated by the representatives of the profession. Brown (2006) also sees the tension between the personal and the professional knowledge in terms of power and suggests that the power of the institution is greater than that of the individual. The consequence of this may be to make it harder for some to reject professional knowledge and to defend their self-knowledge.

Britzman et al (1997) offer a word of warning and suggest that new practices may in fact not be developed. But instead, the social nature of the experience may lead to the compliance and acceptance of existing practices, as students either compromise their views to avoid being isolated within the new work force or to seek approval from mentors and tutors. Therefore the process of becoming a new teaching professional is beginning to be seen as increasingly complex as it is not sufficient to simply 'transfer' the knowledge and skills of a professional practice; the interactions within the early practical experience are such that an individual's past and dispositions need to be considered; and crucially the social nature of this process cannot be ignored as those already operating within this professional practice will have an impact on how newcomers negotiate their developing professional practice.

Defending the 'attack' of knowledge:

Deborah Britzman (2003) claims that education inaugurates a crisis as it augments the influence of the present external world on that of the past

world now represented by (unconscious) internal conflicts. Thus new knowledge creates fear as it threatens the existing knowledge, and what is known about the self. It can be seen as putting the ego, the self, under unreasonable pressure to deal with contrasting internal and external demands. This heightened level of anxiety increases the potential for the dynamic unconscious to mobilize its defences against the 'attack' of new knowledge. For those entering educational settings this is manifest in dealing with the required professional knowledge and the associated rejection of this in favour of immediate practical experience. Pitt and Britzman (2003) highlight the notion of 'difficult knowledge' and recognise that no knowledge is valueless and requires dealing with as it becomes aligned to existing values or rejected.

Pitt (1998) considers the role of resistance and draws attention to the psychoanalytical position that resistance is initiated when one approaches their unconscious knowledge, as this is after all what the unconscious has been defending from the conscious mind. For the clinician this is a well-known phenomenon and one function of the therapeutic encounter is for the analyst to recognise the unconscious material and bring it into awareness. What makes the work difficult is that the dynamic unconscious of the patient will defend against accepting the difficult unconscious knowledge. This can result in recovery being resisted and significant periods of impasse as the ego defences actively block access to unconscious knowledge.

Resistance can also be viewed in terms of the notion of an archaic omnipotence which builds on Winnicott's idea of how the infant defends against feelings of helplessness. Winnicott (1965) argues that the infant has to create a delusion of omnipotence that enables them to 'magic up' mother on demand. In the close relationship between mother and infant, the mother becomes sufficiently attuned to the child such that she can anticipate their needs. The delusion created by the infant is that their wishes, either vocalized or fantasized, always come true and without this delusion the infant would realise their utter helplessness and dependence on the mother. The dynamic unconscious therefore protects them from this sense of hopelessness by creating the delusion of omnipotence. Omnipotence can still be witnessed in later life when adults refuse to admit to the limits of their own real power. For Winnicott, the process of learning is linked to the realisation and renouncing of this delusion. Within the context of an educational setting, Pitt (1998) argues that this process can be manifest through the process of disavowal. This is a defence where there is a resistance to admit to the reality of not knowing, or of being helpless and utterly dependent on an 'other' and the subsequent rejection of 'imposed' professional knowledge.

Felman (1982) and Schleifer (1987) both provide a Lacanian insight into teachers' encounters with new knowledge and confirm the resistance noted by Britzman (2003) and Pitt (1998). Felman maintains that total knowledge can never be known as it cannot be experienced due to the unconscious

defences protecting the individual from being overwhelmed with new knowledge. For Pitt (1998) it is an impossible endeavour to know what is in the unconscious as is it uncomfortable, containing taboos and painful conflicts, and therefore defended. But also it is forever changing as the effects of present experience continually change and interact with the perceived historical truth. Consequently, the truth about ourselves that we can be aware of, is never quite the truth based on a complete self-knowledge, as the ego defences resist attempts to uncover this material. Schleifer sees this in the context of Lacan's 'passion for ignorance' as this is not a passive 'not knowing' but the result of a dynamic unconscious that seeks to defend against new knowledge. This passion for ignorance is a barrier to learning, both for the professional and the pupil. The assimilation of new knowledge can therefore only occur when the internal psychic defences are sufficient to support the potential threat that this may represent (Brown, 2006). Both Felman (1982) and Schleifer (1987) suggest that because of this passion for ignorance, teacher 'education' will be resisted and the best that can be hoped for is to create the conditions for learning and dealing with new knowledge. One of the conditions for learning is to be able to consider the desire not to know as pedagogically important as what is known and to accept, as the clinician does, that what is not known or resisted can teach us something.

For the beginning or experienced teacher the psychic defence mechanisms to reject and resist new knowledge can explain the unwillingness to engage with theory or continued professional development. Student teachers act out what Gardner (1994) calls a 'furor to teach', in which they defend ,against this capacity to doubt and the interest in using knowledge as a means for world making and self-making' (Britzman, 2000 p. 203).

The furor to teach is demonstrated as a desire to reject theory in favour of a focus on their teaching experience and in doing so they reduce the possibility of doubting their actions and prevent the inevitable risky encounter with new knowledge. If the anxiety becomes too troublesome then defences will be employed on the theory and practice, where theory, or new knowledge, is regarded as bad and practice, that reflects personal experience, as good.

It is therefore incumbent on those who are responsible for the training and/or education of teachers to create a disposition for learning that recognises the difficulty new knowledge creates. Such a process should involve the opportunity to consider how the personal and professional worlds interact and ultimately how each individual's biography can be implicated in their developing professional practice.

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Margot's Red Shoes:
When Psychic Reality Challenges Teaching

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> *It almost looks like analysis were the third of those "impossible" professions in which one can be quite sure of unsatisfying results. The other two, much older-established, are education and the government of nations.*
>
> *(Freud, 1925)*

Presentation

Educational environments can be studied from a wide and valuable variety of perspectives: historical, sociological, philosophical, didactical and psychoanalytical. The question tackled here is how can psychoanalytic theory be used in the study and understanding of the relationships and psychic processes at work in the educational experience of a primary school teacher? From a researcher's point of view, the area explored will focus on the teacher/pupil relationship and deal with the role of the intrasubjective and intersubjective in teaching, displaying aspects of the ambivalent dynamics of love and hate likely to occur in an educational process. The authors' theoretical background is that of French clinical research undertaken within a psychoanalytically informed approach in the field of education and training. This approach acknowledges psychic reality, unconscious phenomena and processes, and attempts to characterize, understand and explore them in educational contexts (Blanchard-Laville, Chaussecourte, Hatchuel, Pechberty, 2005). The present contribution is focused on teaching practices and comments on a short episode, (taken from a monograph composed by the teacher), while she was participating in a professional practices analysis group. The teacher/researcher, Anne, is fully involved in the clinical vignette presented since it centres on an eight year old girl whom she has been observing in her own class during a school year. It will therefore mostly be written down in the first person. The experience shared in this paper has marked a formative turning point in the teacher's awareness of the intricacy of the teaching position. Today, in a similar situation, considering the psychical transformation that took place, she presumes, with some justification, that she would think, feel and act differently, as well as consider other aspects of the interactions and environment.

After outlining the framework in which the present research has been undertaken an illuminating episode will be presented. It will be concisely analyzed and followed by commentaries. These sections are mainly written by Anne, and thus the personal pronoun 'I' will be used.

Framework

As a primary school teacher, I became acutely aware of the fact that the quality of my relationship with children in my class was influenced by intrasubjective and intersubjective processes beyond consciousness and will. My professional experience has convinced me that, indeed, unconscious phenomena do not stand waiting patiently outside the classroom door, a fact that affects both teaching and learning abilities. I have named the little girl whom I chose to observe "Margot". My observations were recorded in a class log while, in parallel, I was attending a Balint type group in which I could share the professional difficulties I was experiencing. Thus the study carried out consisted in combining complementary processes, bringing solitary writing work to an exclusively talking group work. This setting's dynamics have generated what Michael Balint (1957) might have called a "*limited though considerable change of personality,*" a change that has definitely challenged my professional identity and practice.

At the core of my monograph (Bastin, 2009) was the class log on Margot that I carefully kept. To this end, I had set up a framework composed of three steps. Step one consisted in writing down facts related to the little girl that I observed in the class and in the playground, during a break or after the class. In step two, when the school day was over, I recorded my immediate reactions to these facts, unelaborated feelings and thoughts. Between step two and step three, I reported in my seminar group some of the difficulties that emerged in my relationship with Margot, and tried to work them through with the help of the group. Step three was a rewriting process through which I reconsidered the situation in question as well as my understanding of it in a more profound and psychoanalytically informed way. This last phase could have been endless since the more I worked on a situation the deeper was my understanding of it. However, I decided to put an end to this rewriting process in the month of July immediately following the end of the school year in question. This paper could be considered as a fourth step in the whole process since it takes into account the previous steps and invites me to reconsider the situation from a perspective that has been renewed by further experiences, reflections and working-through, related to my teaching practices. The subsequent ideas will be conveyed in the next section.

In the *professional practices analysis group* (Blanchard-Laville and Pestre, 2001a) that I attended, we were invited to share our professional difficulties and voice our emotions and thoughts. It was a closed, on-going group, including teachers, social workers and other educators. We used to meet

every two months for three hours in a comfortable place during the whole school year. There were eight participants then and we did not know one another nor did we work together outside. The group leader was a highly qualified person trained in group analysis, who provided an ethical, benevolent *container-contained* (Bion, 1963) environment. No notes were allowed. The group was ruled by confidentiality, respect and responsibility. The group feedbacks were aimed at increasing the understanding of what might be going on, with factual questions or personal emotional reactions, but no advice. Each of us worked in two consecutive sessions. In the first session, the presenter would describe a current case giving cause for thought or distress. In the following session, s/he would share with the group what had happened between the sessions both in *external or shared reality* (Winnicott, 1971) and on a psychical level. Personally, recalling some elements that had been worked through in this group, significantly helped me gain some psychical relief and deepen my comprehension of the hindrances I was confronted with professionally.

The episode with Margot

I shall now share some of my understanding of the psychical processes perceived in the particular teacher/pupil relationship between myself and Margot. I began by keeping her in my mind at the end of the preceding school year because her former teacher had drawn my attention to the little girl, who was presented to me as needing to be "handled with care" because of her delicate family and school story. Her parents were denied custody of Margot. Consequently, her elder sister (aged 20) had been designated as Margot's legal protector and they both lived with their grandmother. It was the first time I encountered such a situation professionally. Her school achievements being very poor, it had been decided that she would be repeating her second grade in my class. The whole year had been dotted with family events that disrupted the child's schooling. The following episode took place in February.

Step one: factual notes

> *This morning, Margot looks restless. I see her making large gestures and wanting to speak a lot. We are correcting a math exercise. Walking between the aisles of tables I notice that she has found the correct answer and quickly conclude that she has understood the lesson. She puts her hand up and talks "nonsense". It makes me unhappy and I send her to the blackboard in order to correct what I believed she had done right in her exercise book. But she walks awkwardly, limping, the red boot on her left foot half on. She looks all bothered, writes something on the blackboard, then turns back to look at me. I am so overwhelmed that I cannot recall what she has written down.*

Step two: notes on my immediate reactions and questions

This morning I find it difficult to cope with her agitation and her interventions that I consider inappropriate. I wanted to give her the opportunity to show herself in the light of a successful pupil and correct an exercise that she had got right, but she accentuates her neglected and "unbalanced" aspect. Maybe this sends me back to the little girl I once was? Yet, I imagine I had been quite the opposite: invisible, inaudible, but sharing maybe something of this "unbalance"? Could Margot be a caricature of the pupil I once was that I was ashamed of? I do not forget that acting stupid can also be a defence. Did she try to provoke me and to test something in me? To what extent could I accept her, love her? Or did she have a role to play in front of the class as a pupil repeating her year? It is also possible to make a parallel between Margot's elder sister and a situation I once was in myself. As a "tutor" wouldn't I want to see this young 'plant' grow straight? [In French, the word "tuteur" means law guardian, study tutor and garden stake.]

These notes reveal a certain awareness of the echo existing between Margot's present family story and my past personal story. What could be called a "resonance effect" has most probably generated my immediate empathic feelings towards this little girl. Despite a certain familiarity with psychic reality, I have felt totally disorientated in front of this sort of unconscious staging of repressed wounds that suddenly burst into this seemingly ordinary class situation. Keeping the class log helped me to lay down on a sheet of paper the confusion that took hold of me then, and that I could not assimilate, which I would associate with Bion's *beta-element* being expelled from me to be contained in words by a blank page. This process of writing indeed helped me transform the chaos into something less strange, more digestible. I then reported this situation in my seminar group because I was still struck with my attitude and mixed feelings of guilt, distress and anger. By the end of that school year, I could write the following analysis of the episode:

Step three: a more clinical analysis

Am I seeing in Margot a younger sister of mine or am I projecting onto this pupil the child I believe I was? I altogether wish that Margot would grow up and stop speaking "nonsense." I would like her to write the correct answer on the blackboard and at the same time I expose her to possible mockery from the other pupils by not anticipating that she would be limping towards the blackboard. Why didn't I simply tell me that her boot was not properly attached without feeling upset? Why didn't I concentrate on the school work? I think I would have acted differently with another child and I dislike this. Regarding the math exercise, I make the hypothesis that if I had felt I mastered this subject better, I would have been more interested in the didactical content and centred on the task that was pushed into the background. What would have happened if it had been a French or an English lesson? The question of the teacher's link to knowledge may also be raised here.

'Today's' commentary

Many years later, I would confirm that individual writing, together with group analysis, sustained me psychically, enabling me to *think my thoughts* and find a more appropriate professional posture. At first, I did not clearly realize that the type of link that had been automatically established between Margot and me could be considered as *projective identification* (Klein, 1952) on my part regarding her and her family situation. It caused me to lose grasp of reality whereas Margot, struggling with my confusion and her own feelings, would accumulate "mistakes"; that is, after she had said "nonsense", she went to the blackboard limping and did not, could not, write an appropriate answer. Hence, she was acting so differently from the child I had imagined she was, that my reactions became inadequate. The defence mechanisms I had built up to protect myself from intrusive emotions and memories that I could not deal with then, also comprised a good part of idealization of the teaching profession and of the pupils. In order for Margot to restore part of her alterity then, wasn't she somehow compelled to exaggerate her clumsiness for me to see the little girl she really was? I am also questioning the meaning of Margot's attitude that could possibly be identified as self-sabotage, but do not feel I can confidently develop this assumption.

Yet I would say that this unexpected confrontation with reality has awakened feelings oscillating between tenderness and rejection. I was aware of the affection I had for Margot and my conscious motivation in sending her to the blackboard was to enhance her self-esteem. The next minute I reprimanded her and sent her back to her seat. These acts were neither pedagogical nor centred on the task for which we were supposed to be together in a classroom. Similar reactions surfaced in other specific moments of the year which were resonating strongly with parts of my own story that were still sensitive. They generated internal conflicts in me due to the feelings of helplessness and inadequacy that Margot awoke, and because of the struggle to avoid causing her pain. Therefore, the more I could work these affects through, the better. Sharing this experience in an appropriate environment allowed me to learn from it, somehow in the same way as that which Isca Salzberger-Wittenberg et al. reported about a group of teaching staff beginning a course she gave at the Tavistock Clinic in London on Aspects of Counselling in Education: "*Of course, everyone knows about feelings of insecurity, but we tend to pay lip-service to these, hide them, ignore them or ride rough-shod over them. (…) The purpose of engaging the teachers in such scrutiny of their here and now experience was neither a therapeutic one nor a model setting intended to be used in school situations. It simply provided an opportunity for learning from experience that such feelings, which we usually relegated to infants and very young children, are indeed ubiquitous, that such anxieties continue to exist to some degree in all of us throughout life. Knowing about them from within ourselves increases our perceptiveness and understanding of others.*

It made the group of teachers identify and sympathise with those they taught…" (p. 5).

Since I consider that I cannot speak for the pupil, or put myself completely in her place, I shall unfold further interpretative propositions using counter-transferential insights. They lead me to make the assumption that Margot might have been unconsciously holding four uncomfortable places, two of them belonging to reality and the other two echoing her teacher's phantasy: the former refer to Margot as the actual child and pupil, the latter refer to her as the teacher's phantasized younger sister or daughter and as the *pupil-self* of the teacher – a concept developed by Claudine Blanchard-Laville (2001b) referring to the pupil whom the teacher phantasizes s/he has been. On my part, I could say that four roles were an issue too: I was at the same time the actual teacher and a woman coping with reality, and might have been an imaginary elder sister and mother for Margot. Besides, since unconscious phenomena tend to venture into external reality more strikingly in moments of anxiety, fears and expectations unwittingly lay beneath this tricky situation. "*We never completely outgrow infantile wishes and attitudes and they are bound to some extent to invade our private and intimate relationships. It is important, however, that we strive to become aware of them so as to minimize their interference in our professional life.*" (Salzberger-Wittenberg et al., 1983, p. 41).

As far as fears are concerned, Margot might have been afraid of being abandoned again or unloved by her teacher and anxious not to fail again in her school achievements. I might have been anxious of being overwhelmed with the affects that Margot's family situation could revive and also in fear of failing in my teaching ability to help her. Regarding expectations, I assume that Margot could have been searching for some kind of unconditional love from me and some form of reparation of her present family situation. As for me, I might have been trying to offer Margot the symbolic reparation she sought, repairing in the process my own past that was being repeated in front of my eyes and eliciting mixed feelings of helplessness and anger. Some of the internal conflicts we were both confronted with could have been articulated this way by Margot: "I would like my teacher to be a good mother for me but she is not my mother and never will be." Whereas I could have said: "I would like to 'save' Margot but she is neither my little sister nor my daughter and never will be; I cannot and I must not do so." On a more institutional level, this raised the question of a teacher's responsibility: where is the happy medium, the *well-tempered holding* (Blanchard-Laville, 2001b), between excessive involvement and undue neglect?

Little by little, all this turmoil cleared up, Margot became a pupil among other pupils again, and, as Donald Winnicott might describe an ordinary mothering person, I felt like an ordinarily *failing and mending* (Abram, 1996) teacher again. These changes might have been linked to a feeling of inner security that Margot managed to develop, knowing she was accepted, understood and taken care of by her teacher as she was, in her specific

situation. She thus became available for learning again. Then, she might have been able to think: "At school, I am in my place, I am a child of my age, allowed to develop and play safely, and I am a pupil free to think and concentrate on school activities." Similarly, given the psychical release that occurred for me, I could have said: "I am sensitive to the well-being of the child who has been entrusted to me but have no feeling of guilt regarding her situation. I am (solely) responsible for her as the pupil she is as well as for her learning achievements."

Prospect

To conclude, even if only a very small part of the psychical processes at work in an educational setting has been considered here, I can assert that the present research carried out has transformed my perception of teaching. The experience of writing, together with my participation in a professional practice analysis group, has operated as a containing process that I could internalize and nurture. I associate it with Bion's digestive model of the *thought-thinking apparatus* and specifically with what he stated about a mother's ability to welcome and "digest" her baby's intense archaic bodily feelings and emotions, i.e. what he called the *capacity for maternal reverie* (Bion, 1963). In some similar way, it helped me make sense of and better tolerate the states of anxiety I encountered, as well as develop some of my own *alpha-function* - if I may say. Fostering such skill could be transferred in class to the benefit of the pupils. It has also made me more alert and less helpless in front of unconscious phenomena occurring in educational settings, either in myself or in my relationship with the children. Imperceptibly, this work has had an impact on my professional identity. I can, for instance, set more adequate professional boundaries and clearly differentiate between being a teacher and acting as a therapist or a social worker. Furthermore, in a positive way, my profession is less idealized, which also contributes to ameliorating certain phantasies of omnipotence and helplessness. There is more room for alterity and creativity, and being a *good enough teacher,* as C. Blanchard-Laville says, paraphrasing Winnicott, becomes a sound and demanding enough aspiration.

  Nevertheless, psychical realities and external realities will necessarily continue to collide even in the most ordinary–looking teaching settings, since at school as well as in other helping profession settings, intersubjective interactions are highly complex. The fact is that a teacher faces vicissitudes s/he hasn't always been adequately prepared to cope with, and, more often than not, these happen to revive the specifically human archaic feeling of helplessness, for instance. Will they be greeted, repressed or creatively transformed? The teacher's response may vary according to her/his personality but is likely to grow more and more inadequate unless s/he is sufficiently supported. Defence mechanisms such as denial, splitting, projective identification, idealization, may become

friendly warning signs, should teachers be supported to accept and recognize them. As a matter of fact, when unconscious disruptive phenomena arise, although they are inherent to the particular professional status or situation, they still tend to be attributed to personal failure, which adds intensity to the ordeal that the teacher is enduring. Claudine Blanchard-Laville's research findings have defused this equivalence drawn between professional suffering and incompetence (Blanchard-Laville, 2002). The extreme complexity of the teaching profession as one of the three Freudian *impossible professions* (Freud, 1925), requires continuing attention. In his GP groups, Balint supported "*the courage of one's own stupidity*". Likewise, each move in the direction of teachers' psychical growth and release is a courageous and responsible step forward that alleviates troublesome and worrying teacher/pupil relationships. It can also liberate the teaching space for actual teaching and learning whilst placing at the heart of these interactions the best of their human dimension.

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Self-Respect, Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem: psychoanalytic and philosophical implications for Higher Education

Tony Brown, Mark Murphy

The role of public policy in shaping the language of education

Before discussing the potential contribution to education that can be made by psychoanalytic theory and Honneth's philosophy, we want to say something about the hegemonic role that government policy has played, over recent years, in redirecting the discourse of HE study from the pursuit of academic learning towards the student as customer – presenting the student as someone involved in buying a qualification rather than acquiring knowledge of a discipline.

UK universities find themselves subject to power struggles for control of the future of higher education - an education process that is primarily funded by public taxation but whose ownership has been claimed by neoliberal politicians in the three most recent administrations. We believe that rather than shaping universities through the application of market forces, the value of higher education should be determined by reference to widely recognised quality standards in education and training, applied to locally managed institutions which reflect the broad consensus of local and regional needs and aspirations.

This marketised repositioning of the student undermines the educational process. It denies the need for time in which to develop students' knowledge, skills and attitudes. It deliberately confuses education with training, by seeking to present knowledge in reductionist terms as 'profitable enterprise' focusing on facts to be taught and skills to be learned. It re-presents education as rote learning and avoids or denies the pedagogical insights of teachers and researchers who know that to acquire deep understanding of their academic discipline, students have to engage with troublesome knowledge.

The need for a reconceptualisation of learning

We argue for a shift away from a focus on the individual, towards a view of education as a relational activity. We also argue that HE programmes need to address values directly. This has become imperative since we have begun

to realise how urgently we need to address urgent contemporary challenges such as global warming, climate change, and depletion of the earth's resources. Societies need, more than ever, the engagement of students who understand how their discipline can contribute to solving local, regional and global challenges. This imperative requires students who are able to engage directly with a values agenda in relation to their subject. A values-free market approach to higher education denies us this opportunity. By contrast, a relational approach to education encourages students to study their discipline in ways that turn 'the abstract concept of social citizenship into a practical reality' (Bauman 2007: 9).

However, speaking up for higher education as a key player in a participatory democracy requires a commitment from educators to work towards policies, values and social practices that promote commitment to a more equal and just society. According to Giroux universities can start this process by ensuring that programmes reintroduce:

> '…educational policies, values, and social practices that help produce civic identifications and commitments, teach young people how to participate in and shape public life and exercise critical judgment…' (Giroux 2009: 253)

Exploring learning from a relational perspective challenges conventional thinking about curriculum, assessment and student guidance. A re-conceptualisation of learning is overdue because it is not predominantly an intellectual, cognitive process, but one where there is 'ever-present affectivity' (Tahta 1986). For many students there is little opportunity within their formal studies to explore their affective engagement with learning and teaching. We argue here that learning, in this broader sense, is always the result of relationships through which the subject (student) is continually being recreated by intersubjective processes that shape identification through self-other recognition.

Learning as troublesome knowledge for an intersubjective self

Learning is influenced by, and also disrupts, ego stability. Learning can be exciting when the ego is under mild threat – for example when making one's first seminar presentation or meeting your tutor for a first tutorial - but learning can be disrupted significantly by unconscious defences when the threat to the ego is too great to bear. Too little tension and the learning can be experienced as dull and irrelevant, too much and it can be experienced as overwhelming and destructive.

Students often feel that once they struggle to know something, they can never be quite the same again. And, as if this struggle were not enough, the process continually returns, refusing to offer consolation for very long. Egos are not formed, nor are desires done away with once and for all. The ego is never finished, but always incomplete (Todd 2001: 433). As Todd reminds

us, the ego is never complete and formal education settings provide a desirable site for students and tutors to rework prior experiences through Freud's 'after-education' as part of the process of ego development (Brown 2009). Education is a risky business, we approach it ambivalently: excited but fearful, wanting to be different but not always wanting to change or be changed.

Thomas Ogden (1994), writing about the relationship between therapist and analysand, identifies a 'third subject' that shapes and controls therapeutic settings. Borrowing from his therapeutic model and relocating it within the context of education and student learning, Ogden's insight allows for recognition and exploration of the academic discipline as the third subject. The academic discipline is a disembodied other that is often related to as if it were real: a loved, hated, mysterious, quirky and demanding, powerful other, with which tutor and student develop an increasingly complex triadic relationship. The student learns to engage with the discipline first through study and physical work in the form of attending lectures, writing essays, seminar papers, tutorial notes, and so on, and through emotional work as ego-development, with strong feelings of elation and belonging when the student senses they understand the discipline in broad and deep terms. The relationships that develop through a love of the academic discipline can promote powerful feelings of belonging to a high status and privileged group - an exclusive society defined by access to knowledge and power.

In sharp contrast to these feelings, Ogden observes that the 'third subject' can be subjugating, where study of the discipline leads to tyrannical control over subject-subject relations between tutors and students, who can find themselves powerless and manipulated, and where opportunities for thinking, feeling and acting become limited, and neither tutor nor student is able to experience self or other outside of a suffocating, narrow range of thoughts and behaviours.

In their writing Meyer and Land (2006) discuss functional and dysfunctional student relationships with the academic discipline through 'threshold concepts' and troublesome knowledge. Whilst they acknowledge the importance of Winnicott's psychoanalytical writings, they nevertheless stay much closer to the cognitive constructivist tradition, by exploring troublesome knowledge mainly in relation to cognitive tasks and the need to structure knowledge in the brain.

When the student's relationship with the discipline gets played out through a restrictive and narrow range of thoughts and feelings, students and tutors can become locked in a 'compulsively repeated perverse scenario', which can give rise to feelings of being excluded, attacked or dehumanised by knowledge, status and self-other relationships. Ogden's contribution is useful in reminding us that the student's work (to engage with and demonstrate understanding of a body of knowledge as the student of a tutor and a discipline) includes a component that connects directly to unconscious processes.

Pitt and Britzman (2003) draw on Freudian theory to explore knowledge that is experienced as a threat to self-coherence. They explore philosophical and pedagogical views of troublesome knowledge in terms of the relationship between education and social justice. They argue that there exists a:

kernel of trauma in the very capacity to know. Contemporary efforts in critical, feminist, and gay-affirmative pedagogies elaborate some of these breakdowns in understanding. They focus on understanding the interests of learners to engage critically with both narratives of historical traumas such as genocide, slavery, and forms of social hatred and questions of equity, democracy, and human rights. For pedagogical theorists, "difficult knowledge" also signifies the problem of learning from social breakdowns in ways that might open teachers and students to their present ethical obligations. (Pitt and Britzman 2003: 756)

Dominant contemporary pedagogies resist the implications that flow from knowledge as troubling and difficult. Freud saw it as impossible to achieve complete success with any education project. His observation was that:

'It almost looks as if analysis were the third of those 'impossible' professions in which one can be sure beforehand of achieving unsatisfying results. The other two, which have been known much longer, are education and government'. (Freud 1937: 248)

Applying psychoanalytic and critical theory to learning

Discussions of learning (and teaching) in higher education that focus on the relational, have the capacity to avoid, or at least to limit, pathologising the student and the tutor. Non-relational models by contrast tend to take the student's desire for granted, reframing it as motivation and regarding it primarily as an individual trait. Failure to achieve good grades, failure to manage the relationship between tutor and student, poor attendance and dropout, are conceived within a "deficit" model that confirms individuals as inadequate, where the tutor lacks knowledge, skills, training, or an appropriate disposition and the student lacks motivation, application, language and study skills, or confidence. A relational approach does something different. It brings the difficulties in learning and teaching back to the quality of the relationships between tutor and student, arguing that they are influenced not only by immediate circumstances, but also through the functioning of unconscious processes which can make unanticipated and powerful connections between current experiences and our earliest relationships.

Rather than offering a pathology of student learning or failure of tutor skills and techniques, psychoanalytic pedagogy and Honneth's theory of recognition relocate failures, crises and difficulties within the relationships that the student establishes with tutors, peers, the institution (as a disembodied other) and the discipline under study (law, economics,

medicine, design, dance, fine art, …). From this perspective student learning is seen as embedded and embodied within interpersonal (subject-subject) relational dynamics. Since relationships can be worked at, started and ended, nurtured or put on hold, the opportunities for creating good quality learning are dependent only on the ability to relate to real and disembodied others .

Axel Honneth (1995) has developed critical theory by building on the work of the Frankfurt School and by drawing on psychoanalytic theory, in particular the psychoanalytic work of Klein and Winnicott in the Object Relations School. Honneth argues that an understanding of social relations is predicated on an understanding of the intersubjective relationships of recognition. His approach has the potential for re-affirming the purpose of higher education as an intellectual activity intended to advance knowledge, skills and values in academic disciplines whilst recognising that the complexity of learning includes self-referential engagement and the existence of unconscious mental processes.

Honneth identifies three distinct levels of self-relation:

- self-confidence;
- self-respect;
- self-worth.

Self-confidence is achieved when subjects recognise for themselves their physical needs and desires and can articulate them to self and others. A second level exists when subjects recognise their own moral accountability and the value of their personal judgment: Honneth calls this level self-respect. The third level, what Honneth refers to as self-worth and what we have referred to in this paper as self-esteem, is achieved when the subject recognises and celebrates the certainty of their own capabilities and positive qualities.

The crucial element of Honneth's theory is his argument that these levels are achieved only through self-other recognition. Self-confidence develops when one is recognised by significant others in terms of love and care, as an individual with needs and desires, possessing a unique value to others. Self-respect develops out of recognition by others that one is just as responsible for one's actions as are all others in society – one is recognised by others as a morally accountable member of that society. Self-esteem emerges from the gaze and recognition of others who acknowledge one's capabilities and qualities as making a significant contribution to a community. Honneth links this to a sense of community solidarity – a sense of wellbeing founded on respect and recognition of the contribution being made to common goals.

Honneth sees psychoanalytic theory as making an important contribution to the development of self-recognition theory. Honneth also sees critical theory as something which connects, 'everyday human concerns about identity and respect to broader struggles over exclusion' (Murphy 2008: 2).

Earlier we argued that education pedagogy needs to recognise student learning as a lengthy engagement with troublesome and difficult knowledge. We believe this is a necessary conclusion to be drawn from a study of psychoanalytic and critical theories as applied to education.

'… learning occasions an 'ontological' violence, [with] ethical relations implicated in pedagogy and curriculum. [where] pedagogy is rooted in a demand for students to alter their egos, and, thereby, draws attention to the delicate nature of the teaching-learning relationship'. (Todd 2001: 431)

Todd argues that educators teach in the belief that learners will change. For Todd the ontological trajectory is best represented by phrases like, 'learning to become': learning that it is possible to become, and learning what to do with the resultant becoming. Accordingly, there are benefits offered by change but also a high price to be paid, 'in terms of the coercive nature of subject formation (ibid 143). According to Todd this tension is reflected in the descriptions that students offer of their experience. They see the possibility of a different ontology through developments with new ideas, concepts, and relationships to other people. Todd views education as being powerfully implicated in student development: creating challenges to self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem through the coercive power it exerts while also offering the opportunity to learn to become other, by moving beyond previously imagined limits. A psychoanalytic pedagogy must acknowledge the centrality of unconscious processes, and with this the implication that our learning is the condensation of fragments of experience that return to us in the present when we least expect them, often with surprising results. 'Something about education makes us nervous' (Britzman 2003: 1). Freud's view was that education inevitably produces discontents on which we can work at a later date and change in some way, by recognising repetitions in our thinking and behaviour and finding ways to avoid acting out by working through the challenges we face. All education is therefore: play between present and past, between presence and absence, and then, by that strange return that Sigmund Freud (1914) describes as deferred: it is registered and revised by remembering, repeating, and working through. (Britzman 2003: 1)

Our education is clearly nonlinear, though some policy makers may prefer to represent it in linear terms of syllabus, curriculum, progression, that is built around time-bound programmes and assessment patterns. Rather, our education continuously unfolds and is reworked in our present - a turbulent mix of conscious and unconscious processes, dream work and the unanticipated conjunctions of affect, deferral, the re-working of old learning, and unexpected unconscious stirrings triggered by present life experiences. Working within a psychoanalytic pedagogy means acknowledging this flux of past and present, where sensitivities to self and others emerge in ways that provoke the reworking of previous experience into what Freud termed an after-education. After-education refers us back to an original flaw made from education: something within its very nature has led it to fail. But it also

refers to the work yet to be accomplished, directing us toward new constructions. (Britzman 2003: 4)

The psychological work needed to achieve self-realisation within a relational context is fundamental to post-Freudian psychoanalytical thought, (Klein 1946; Winnicott 1991 [1971]). In his paper *The Capacity to be Alone* (1958) Winnicott sets out the stages of this increasing capacity, beginning with dependence, leading to being alone together and moving towards self-realisation and autonomy.

Klein's (1946) contribution to psychoanalytic theory was to draw on Freud's work with adults and extend it to the analysis of very young children as well as adults, giving her an enormous breadth of experience which led her to identify the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions from which we relate to others. This work allowed Klein to demonstrate that powerful developmental infantile processes remain active throughout adulthood.

Feelings of detachment, being marginalised and disconnected from immediate learning activities can lead to students relating to tutors and peers from a paranoid-schizoid position: not relating to the whole person but from a fragmented viewpoint, feeling vulnerable and seeing others in 'black and white', as helpful and useful, or unhelpful and dangerous, godlike or evil. According to Klein, only when we regain sufficient self-coherence to defend against being overwhelmed, can we relinquish paranoid-schizoid anxieties and move towards the depressive position, experiencing ourselves and others as more rounded individuals, and recognising in self and other a fuller range of human qualities including strengths and flaws. Only then, free from a fragmented sense of our own self and our qualities, able to recognise others as deeper and more complex, less dangerous or potentially destructive to our ego, can we become present to the other in ways that allow for healthy mutual recognition and the development of autonomous behaviour.

We argue in this paper that education is in essence an experiential process of self-other recognition – of 'coming to know' oneself through encounters with higher education, constructed through self-other recognition. Higher education offers a particularly valuable site for reworking earlier learning, from its position as a formal set of structures and activities (lecture, seminar, tutorial, workshop, private study, assessed work, conferment, graduation, alumni) with a socially loose framework that offers a curious variety of opportunities for intimacy, distance, collaboration and isolation, power and transformation.

Intersubjective recognition requires a self that can survive as a bounded but permeable entity: too strong a separation from the external world and we lack availability, awareness, sensitivity, openness to opportunity and any sense of really 'being in the world'. We risk remaining distant, separate, unknowing of others and (through a diminished quality of self-other relating), we know ourselves less than we realise. Too permeable a boundary and we may experience an overwhelming flood of other people's

desires and energies. The experience of losing our sense of self in a sea of otherness, can led to the splitting of both self and other and to the adoption of Klein's paranoid-schizoid defensive position in an attempt to defend against perceived attacks and overwhelming demands. We can regain Klein's depressive position by gaining sufficient ego strength to take the risks associated with seeking to make ourselves more vulnerable to others and less persecuted by unconscious fears that provoke defensive behaviours. We literally learn to tolerate the selves we become: through a heightened awareness of our own becoming and an acceptance of the risks inherent in being open to the unpredictability of the other.

This is the possibility offered by after-education, achieved through inter-subjective relating and recognition, and which can be summarised by that apparently simple phrase 'the student experience'. Through Honneth's work we can see how the experience of education can strengthen self-recognition and how self-respect, self-confidence and self-esteem can be enhanced by the relational dynamics that operate between the student, peers, tutors and the subject discipline.

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Playing and Adults Learning

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> *"Whatever I say about children playing really applies to adults as well."*
>
> *(Winnicott, 1971, p. 46)*

This paper discusses `playing' in its broadest sense using the work of the psychotherapist and physician Donald Winnicott, who insists on the present participle `playing' rather than the noun `play'. (1971, p. 45). This is because he wants to move away from what he saw as psychoanalysts' preoccupation with play content and the focus to be on the child/adult *playing*.

I have spent thirty years of a professional lifetime teaching older and non-traditional learners and noting their educational journeys. During this time I have formed a conviction that `playing', as Winnicott uses the term, can help in the development of self and the educational progress of students. What is particularly interesting is the importance of playing to theories of learning, not only for children, but more specifically for adults as well.

A range of concepts are contained within Winnicott's complex notion of playing, which essentially commences with theorising about object relations: that is, the quality of our relations with significant others, most obviously prime care givers. Qualities of playing are deeply dependent on the responses of others. For the purposes of this paper I shall focus on transitional objects (phenomena), transitional spaces, alongside significant others.

Transitional objects, teddy bears and other special objects

Winnicott sees the importance of transitional objects (phenomena) as crucial to the healthy development of the infant: they ante-date reality testing. The term transitional in this context 'describes the infant's journey from the purely subjective to objectivity' (p. 7); the use of the term transitional object `gives room for the process of becoming able to accept difference and similarity' (ibid). The mother, largely in the form of the breast or breast substitute, is the first not-me object that the infant encounters. As Winnicott and many parents are aware, a substitute is adopted by the baby, it might be a thumb or finger in the mouth; a strip of satin or smooth material from an early blanket, or an object often associated with Winnicott, that of the teddy bear. There is no gender differentiation in this process which is the

start of a creative capability within the baby, who has thought up, originated his/her own particular object to satisfy a need, resulting in what Winnicott refers to as `The initiation of an affectionate type of object relationship' (1971, p. 2). The object must never change, unless this is brought about by the child and many a parent has reluctantly allowed a scruffy, soiled teddy its place with the infant. The object comes from outside the baby, it can be seen. Winnicott concludes this consideration by suggesting that the object `is gradually allowed to be decathected so that in the course of years it is not so much forgotten as relegated to limbo.' (p. 6). By decathected he means, of course, the withdrawal of emotional investment.

This tendency has meaning for adults too, many of whom have special objects which have the capability to evoke greater calm, security or success. It has been observed, for example, in tennis players and other sports players insisting on wearing the same socks throughout a tournament. Texture seems to be significant and part of the transitional object's essence, possibly part of the initial auto-erotic association with the breast. Many neglected and worn teddies sit on shelves in the later years of the owners, important as symbols of strong affection and object relating, their original use outgrown; worn because as well as love they have been the recipients of the anger and frustration of their owner. They have served their purpose, but as transitional objects have helped and continue to help the self with its negotiations with reality.

The potential for transitional objects is present in adult life too and, like the teddy, can remain long after the initial reason for the object relationship is lost. Transitional objects can be a valuable aid in teaching and learning, a way to extend knowledge and understanding in a secure space. As Winnicott remarks `patterns set in infancy may persist into childhood , so that the original soft object continues to be absolutely necessary at bedtime or times of loneliness or when a depressed mood threatens' (p. 5). Some adults' experiences as learners – not least in times of transition and associated anxiety – may reactivate the early childhood process. Theorising around transitional objects is an area where teachers of non-traditional older learners can recognise a pattern from infancy. Some adults attach themselves to transitional objects that have this function, a special pen, or room which is associated with a first successful piece of work may ward off the anxiety remaining from prior unsatisfactory learning experiences, as well as the interaction of this with present times. Transitional objects remain a defence against anxiety, and can manifest themselves in a range of scarcely noticeable forms: a catch phrase a teacher has used, scribbled at the top of an exam script; the notes that signify learning and understanding a topic, loss of which can bring about extreme distress. An adaptive teacher will respond with empathy to what to others might appear a trivial event.

From transitional objects (phenomena) to transitional spaces and safe spaces – the role of illusion

The infant in its earliest stages experiences the breast as part of itself, an illusion that is gradually discovered as it realises that the breast is not-me. Object relations, the problem of what is objectively perceived and yet subjectively conceived, me or not-me, is a perpetual human preoccupation. Winnicott identifies a space between them

> [It] *is the area allowed to the infant between primary creativity and objective perception based on reality-testing.* The transitional phenomena represent the early stages of the use of illusion, without which there is no meaning for the human being in the idea of a relationship with an object that is perceived by others as external to that being (p. 13) (italics Winnicott's)

A sense of security is an important part of this process, initially this is created via the adaptive mother who, when the adaptation is good-enough, `gives the infant the illusion that there is an external reality that corresponds with the infant's own capacity to create' (p. 14). The breast, in fact, was already there - an object, it is created only in the baby's inner reality.

Winnicott's theory of transitional spaces proceeds from this illusion, he sees

> … the main function of the transitional object and of transitional phenomena … (is to) start each human being off with what will always be important for them i.e. *a neutral area of experience which will not be challenged* (p. 14) (italics mine)

It has to take place within a safe and protected space. In the earliest instance it is that tiny area that is present between the mother and very young infant. The safe space has to be able to contain conflicts and tensions; a parallel with the classroom suggests itself here and is further developed later in the paper. In `Varieties of Psychotherapy' (1986/90, p. 107) Winnicott refers to this situation as `holding' both metaphorically and literally, which he sees as one of the functions of the good enough mother; the same could be said for the good enough teacher. The following case study considers the role of transitional phenomena and safe places for playing in the context of adult learning.

A case study: A Teacher's Narrative and steps into auto/biography[1]

1. See work in bibliography by Merrill and West; and Stanley

Liz is a teacher in a college of further education, which traditionally, at least in part, makes education available to students post sixteen, who have failed to achieve at school. Liz's narrative traces her educational trajectory set against the cultural and political background of a deprived area on the south east Kent coast of England. The transcript from a first biographical narrative interview (undertaken as part of my doctoral study) locates her, both

literally and emotionally, within a working class family. I consider Liz's cultural background is significant in her success with `failing' students: she is someone with whom they can easily identify.

In her written response to the interview Liz gave more details of her family background

> Home was a small terraced house: front room; middle room; scullery; outside toilet; three bedrooms and a tin bath hung on the wall in the back yard. Opening the front door, I was always met with a particular smell that told me which day of the week it was: *Lux Soap Flakes* – Monday; *Robin Starch* – Tuesday; stew – Wednesday and so on.

What might be evident in the transcript is Winnicott's good enough parents creating secure spaces within the family home where a child could grow and develop, play and imagine in safety. It is only when reflexively recalling this evocative scene that she realises it occurred at a time when the family was extremely hard pressed financially. It is also interesting that her father, in the next extract and beyond, plays a highly significant role in her story telling, her sense of security as well as capacity for playing.

> I wonder at however we got through that winter. Dad was a master bricklayer and due to the severe frosts and snow he was unable to work for much of that time. Being self–employed meant that he did not receive any state...[benefit] It is an example and testimony to the protection and security my parents gave me. *They did not allow their adult world to impinge upon my child's world of wonder and excitement*. I was cocooned from harsh realities – and yet at the same time I cannot say that I was wrapped in cotton wool. (italics mine).

The key sentence – as I see it - has been highlighted in italics. Money was always scarce, but Liz's abiding memory is a sense of warmth and security. These early childhood experiences with more than `good enough' parents helped Liz to establish a clear and confident core self, that Winnicott sees as instrumental to imagination and creativity, for playing and the sense of the world as a place with which one wants to engage. She stresses that she was not `cocooned' but that her parents gave her sufficient transitional space to understand both the frustrations and realities of the world, alongside its imaginative satisfaction.

The winter referred to above was also one in which some of her most imaginative and influential memories occurred. This is the `White Horses' incident, which is detailed below. Liz, I suggest, uses this emotionally cathected narrative to create an imaginative and `transitional space' for her own students: playing in the classroom, as discussed below, was to come alive in the process.

Liz's family background is crucial to her own development. As an adult she comes across as a secure and confident person, resilient, committed to education as a means of progress and self-fulfilment. Nevertheless, she recognisably retains aspects of her working class identity, living very close

to the house she grew up in. For her, educational aspiration does not involve rejecting this earlier identity, but rather combining and integrating it in forging a securer sense of self. I would suggest that her particularly strong and secure familial background is responsible for this. I would also argue that by re-creating potential, transitional spaces in later life – for others, but fuelled or cathected by her autobiographical material - it is possible to provide potential space for those who may have lacked good enough moments in their own early childhood. These can be profoundly auto/biographical experiences, in the present.

A good enough family of origin, and the securer sense of self this may have brought in its train, may have enabled Liz to be resilient enough to overcome setbacks later in her educational biography: for instance, in overcoming feelings of rejection when failing what is termed the 11 plus exam for a grammar school place (this is a test that still exists in parts of England, including Kent, for establishing whether a child has sufficient 'abilities' to benefit from a more academic education). Rejection left her with a deficit of appropriate qualifications for academic progression to university. However, a passion for education, a love of learning for its own sake remained; the motivation to pursue education was dormant but not extinct. Part of the reason for continued motivation (including the strong emotional investment in education), in her story telling, connects to the confidence, and imaginative encouragement of her father. She describes herself as 'blessed' with her parents and family life: as a child she thought 'that's what everyone has'. Experience of teaching students from a similar background to hers had shown her how wrong this assumption was. When Liz's thirst for education re-emerged, this led her to undertake the first step, an Access to Higher Education programme, designed as a route to university for adults without traditional qualifications.

Playing and significant others

While not disregarding the role of her mother, Liz's father is considered to be a `significant other' in this vignette. I want to indicate more of the formative role he seems to have played (at least in her narrative reconstruction) in creating space in early childhood for her imagination, creativity; in short, for playing. He was very much alive in her story-telling as past and present intertwined. The term `significant other', it is to be noted, from a psychoanalytic perspective, includes any person who has great importance in an individual's emotional life, well-being and self-esteem. In object relations theory, such a good object may be available to us in the present, not least when engaging with others who may struggle to see themselves as good enough students.

`…my Dad was the wisest man I've ever known' (Liz's written narrative)

Liz's father died seven years before she returned to learning and the Access to Higher Education programme. In these terms, the continuing impact of early experiences and significant others may be considerable, if also, perhaps, largely unconscious via memory in feeling. In the interview Liz stressed her father's importance in encouraging the development of her imagination and love of reading and learning, in motivating her and instilling what she now terms a transformative concept of education. This is captured and illustrated evocatively in the following passage where she recalled a moment of his imagination merging with her own, father and daughter playing together in the security of a good enough, loving relationship. This is a story of a visit to Dover beach when she was about four years old.

You've got this really rough day and he [her father] said "Can you see the white horses?" He got down, right down, he crouched down at my eye level. Of course it was the foam on the waves, and I said to him "Where?" and he said "Look, there's their manes." And do you know I could see them. I absolutely remember that…I was about 4 years old and he said "This is the place where adventures begin" and, of course, I'm this little thing looking around at the ships and the trains…they're all going out…Coal and cargo…and I remember that as plain as plain, and they are white horses, that's what they were…Yes, he was incredible – the white horses, I'll always remember that.

And the moment was alive in the interview itself, as past and present experience entwined.

Movement to the Classroom

Later, it can be suggested, the experience is developed into a transitional object for her students and enables more fulsome playing in the classroom. The transitional space created by the interview, coupled with the recollection of playing with her father and the contingency of their two imagined worlds, was very powerful. Liz continued to think reflexively after the interview and wrote her own version of the incident; she then adapted this for use in the classroom where it served as a kind of transitional object for her students.

Using auto/biography with the students

Liz adapted a version of the White Horse story as an exercise for her students, but without a conclusion; they were directed to adopt the same voice and complete the chapter; and then she gave them her own conclusion about links between past and present, significant others and learning. The students had been identified as `failing' – and saw themselves

in these terms too – coming, as noted, from one of the most deprived areas of the south east coastal region. This was a cultural background that Liz shared with the students, who, for a variety of reasons, had left school with minimal/no formal qualifications. They were in further education on a programme designed to remove them from what is termed the NEETs' register (not in employment education or training). Government was committed to this in response to a range of social problems.

Liz's written account provided rich evocative material for the students, but they were surprised it was written about the 1970s. They recognised similarities with their own social group but needed to interrogate some of the words used. But they felt included and could identify with Liz, while at the same time accepting her situation as partly other and separate from them. The attempt to continue in Liz's written `voice', different from her everyday speech, was a subtle way of teaching them the appropriateness of different registers for the written and spoken word.

The students initially had to be persuaded that it was permissible to learn creatively, they were nervous of the space created, Liz recalls: 'they could not believe the freedom…it was almost frightening for them…' Liz, however, provided them with a space for playing, which included simultaneously encouraging a more imaginative approach to their English studies. Knights and Thurgar-Dawson in their book on *Active Reading* theorise the situation in the following way

> A spiral of reading → writing→ further reading, can also, within conditions of adequate security, be used to open up questions about the cultural situatedness of the self as at once addressee and agent. (2006, p. 66).

The students' responses to the exercise were astonishingly positive, as Liz perceived it. They began to acquire a `thirst for learning', identified by Liz as a driving force in own her life. It led to the students producing their own magazine. The outcomes seem to have been transformative in the lives of some of these students: with shifts from `failing', to becoming more aspirational. When the paper was written a number were applying for university places. Liz at the very least can be seen as an envoy for the students, a messenger, however unconsciously, about the transformative possibilities of education. It just might be the case that, if interrogated in the future, such students would cite Liz as a significant other.

Conclusion

When applying Winnicott's ideas on playing to this particular teaching/classroom situation, we can observe the interplay of past and present, one life and those of others, in potentially profoundly cathected and auto/biographical ways.

There is evidence here, in Winnicott's terms, that Liz is a more than a `good enough' and `adaptive' teacher, with whom the students can identify and

with whom playing becomes heart felt, if only for a short time. The processes of largely unconscious projective identification at work may be crucial in shifting the quality of the classroom space. Such moments may be far from unique, the use of educational biographies in the classroom is well documented by Dominicé (2000) and West (1996): it is possible to trace in classrooms evidence of sufficiently empathetic, adaptive and emotionally attuned teachers promoting the capacity for playing, including with the symbolic. My own long teaching experience with non-traditional adult learners is redolent of similar auto/biographical, primitive inter-connections, like Liz's, that make playing, in a fulsome sense, more possible.

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Cross identification analysis in the class

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I am a specialist teacher in primary education and my work involves helping children with learning difficulties within a particular network. I help children to become receptive to school learning. Previously, over a long period, I taught classes which could be termed "ordinary". The general subject of my research is the study of unconscious transmission phenomena in the teaching space, from the teacher's viewpoint. The subject of this paper is to understand how the introspective work I undertook with a clinical analysis of professional practice group, followed by written work with a research aim, allowed me to analyse a professional situation which greatly concerned me as a teacher. Firstly, I shall present certain elements of the resources from which my research developed, followed by an illustration of certain prototypical aspects of the work derived from the material mentioned. Since this research is in its early stages, the work presented is clearly provisional in its understanding of a particular professional interaction.

The Nanterre research team

This research stems from work initiated by the laboratory of educational sciences of the Paris Ouest Nanterre University, developed mainly by the *Clinical relationships to knowledge* team, which supports a psychoanalytically-orientated approach to educational science. In a synthesis published in 2005 (Blanchard-Laville, Chaussecourte & al.), the members of this group identify the analysis of practice as one of the sources for understanding unconscious processes in the teaching space, alongside the use of clinical observation and interviews with a research aim (note n°23, p.151).

The facilities

The two stages for undertaking the work recorded here took place over two years. If the initial year of my professional practice and participation in the group of practical analysis is time t_1, writing the journal and the first university use for research aims is time t_2 and the present time is t_3.

I benefited from several resources for my research. Within the group of practical analysis to which I belonged, I presented situations which allowed me to change my views on the situation described, progressively evolving from my involvement as a "reflexive practitioner", participating in a group

of practical analysis, towards an involvement as a researcher, representing an additional shift. This shift was supported by what we can term group research, but also by working on my Masters and more recently in the process of Doctoral study.

The clinic analysis of professional practice group

I discovered the idea of professional practice analysis, with a clinical dimension, at Nanterre University during a Masters seminar. Following this preliminary awareness, I joined a group outside the University and participated for four years. It was a semi-open group with seven to eight participants, combining newcomers and experienced members. The group met every three weeks, with a dozen meetings annually of two and a half hours each. The members worked in activities close to education and training.

This form of work, explicitly referring to a clinic, with a psychoanalytical aim, is conceptually derived from the legacy of the psychoanalysts Michael Balint and Wilfred Bion. It has also been theorized in several publications by C. Blanchard-Laville (2005). A group meets, and is conducted by a leader who ensures a favourable framework for participants' involvement, both containing and reassuring in order to protect those who recount situations in which they took part. At the same time the group creates a space that is stimulating, making psychic processing and understanding more possible for participants' professional functioning. During a meeting, a participant describes a situation which is the cause of a professional problem. The situation is precise, and the speaker personally involved. An exchange follows, concentrating on the particular situation, with questions asked by other group members for clarification, plus additional details added by the speaker. Finally, considerable time is spent on exchanges, free associations, developing hypotheses, always keeping close to the particularities of the speaker's account of the situation, but broadening work perspectives and allowing the person offering the situation to arrive at a new perception of events. The aim of this group work is to transform elements of the participants' professional standing as a result of a release facilitated by psychic "metabolization". This in the sense defined by Bion in his digestive metaphor, i.e. involving a working through of the situations reported in the sessions and the capacity to metabolise various psychic elements During the second year of my participation in the group, I explained situations, on several occasions, which were most difficult for me. They involved a pupil in my class, a boy of eleven I call Zohar: he had problems in learning, in school attitudes, and in his relations with other children and adults at the school.

The research material

During the year following my participation in the professional analysis group, and within the framework of research work to obtain a Master's degree, I wrote a journal "one year with Zohar in my class". This ten page document was written when he was no longer my pupil. It is organised chronologically from September to June and presented as a record of real events (those I can remember), mainly class incidents which had caused tension between Zohar and myself.

When I re-read this journal from a follow-up perspective in order to theorize, I decided that I should leave it just as it was, as a testimony for certain events during time t_1, with the hypothesis that any interference entailed the risk of modifying the content of my account, and thus jeopardising its potential meaning. I therefore chose to add to the original text, rather than changing it, by elaborating on the elements the re-reading provoked in me.

In taking this work up again today, in time t_3, I study certain elements of these two distinct writing times, and try out hypotheses about the place each of them – i.e. the different phases of writing - takes in my psychic elaborations on just what was involved for me as a teacher then, within that teaching space.

Zohar

The journal starts by recounting the arrival of Zohar in my class:

> Zohar arrived in my class several days after the beginning of term. He was late. The headmaster accompanied him, with his mother, and introduced us briefly prior to the new pupil settling in. A table and space had to be found.

> That particular year, (…) in order to free up a teaching job, we had to distribute all the fifth grade pupils into two classes. Every day that passed seemed to bring a new pupil at that level: we were approaching thirty pupils per class, a limit that seemed symbolically impossible to exceed (…) This uncertain situation worried me.

> The start-up activities of the class had already been completed. The pupils had received their exercise books, the information forms to fill in, the school rules, and time had been spent discussing what we would do together throughout the year. Zohar arrived while the pupils were at work. We took the time to get to know each other, and then the pupils continued work while I helped Zohar settle in. I gave him exercise books and invited him to get to work.

These two paragraphs at the beginning of the journal indicate from the start my place in this story: the school teacher listing the facts and focussing on the difficulties met, difficulties due to the overloading of these classes and the pupil missing the start of term. These preliminary paragraphs underline, for the teacher that I was, the real constraints that form an obstacle to Zohar's satisfactory integration into his new class.

The constitution of the psychic group envelope

But I also say more than that: I show a teacher creating the psychic space in which the class will work together, and struggling with a particular pupil.

This memory underlines in a certain way the 'ordinary' activities at the start of the new school year. Objects circulate: notebooks, forms, the school rules which every pupil receives but which the class takes time to read together. The uniqueness of each pupil is recorded in the inquiry forms, containing personal and biographical information, but also a group identity is constituted through everyone expressing their needs, which can become a group project at the start of the year, one to be shared. I think that these objects exchanged are not only material, but that they could constitute in some way psychic objects, particularly for the teacher.

C. Blanchard-Laville, in her work (2001: 221-248), has theorized the constitution of this group psychic envelope created by the teacher in the teaching space, an envelope whose dual qualities of flexibility and firmness make up an unconscious envelope that is "good enough", the qualities of which one can imagine serving to protect the pupils.

Zohar's arrival in this context, or more precisely in my own account in time t_1, seems to constitute an attack on this psychic space: the pupil arrives "late": did his arrival represent an unconscious threat to the group psychic envelope that I was trying to establish?

A year later, integrating the journal in my Master's dissertation, I wrote:

> My welcome on that day was no doubt brief and lacking in warmth. It seems to me that I failed to distance myself from the unfavourable circumstances surrounding the arrival of Zohar: the staggered arrivals, too many pupils, his being late …

The second text, during time t_2, reveals the shift in attitude towards the pupil by the teacher I was: she remains aware of the material conditions influencing Zohar's arrival, conditions felt to be unfavourable, but realises that her welcome to him "lacked warmth". These lines bear witness to the de-centring effect of the difficulty experienced in welcoming this pupil, taking more into consideration what this "poorly welcomed" pupil might be feeling. I hypothesize that a mechanism of *projective identification* is at work here. This psychic mechanism was first described by Melanie Klein as a defence mechanism which a person makes use of in order to protect her/himself from anxiety, by unconsciously projecting onto the other some elements s/he is uncomfortable with. Zohar was the repository for a range of anxious projects: he was a threat that needed to be defended against.

The work in the practical analysis group permitted me to start moving away from my position as a class teacher, towards a more thoughtful place, whereas the first more personal writing exonerated me from responsibility for Zohar's difficulties. These were real and evoked strong defence mechanisms, I came to realise. Thus it was later, during time t_2 that a memory came back to me from my schooldays, which no doubt helped me

to feel empathy for Zohar, which is apparent in the second phase of writing.

> When I was 14, I joined a new school when the family moved. After a week, just when I was beginning to feel accustomed, I had to change classes in order to continue a Latin option. I tried to convince my parents to abandon the language in order to avoid the change, but they refused, so that, unfortunately, I had to join the new class where it took time to integrate and above all to start working.

This memory shows two moments of separation, one of which remains in the background. It is the second separation that appears difficult, whereas the first school separation with which I was confronted when joining a new school is only mentioned. Everything takes place as though the second separation was "catastrophic" for me, whereas I had been able to absorb, emotionally and psychically, the difficulty of the first separation.

The return of this school memory, whilst I was trying to reflect on Zohar's arrival at the school, no doubt permitted me to reach a different understanding of the difficulty experienced by this pupil in his unexpected arrival. The psychic elaboration I undertook during time t_2, by including the account from the journal, allowed me to reach a certain capacity for empathy towards Zohar's feelings, by making contact with a split part of me, the pupil part.

But in time t_3, I suggest another hypothesis: through a projective identification mechanism, might I be projecting elements of my own psychic reality into this situation, putting Zohar in the role of that part of me, the "pupil in difficulty", and somehow asking him to (re)live this traumatic situation? In this hypothesis, the account I give in time t_1 of a sort of "creation" of the class during the first days should be questioned: might it be an idealised account of a group where all doubts, all sufferings, are split away and projected on to one pupil, who in some way becomes the failure-carrier of the group, in the sense of Kaës' (1989) theory of the symptom-carrier. Thus the group could enjoy unmitigated pleasure. The time t_2 account shows that my *capacity for reverie*, theorized by Bion, is not only endangered by this pupil, but also that the first account I wrote already embodies the sense of the attack I felt. It is recognisably there in the text.

The connection with knowledge

I considered the question of the place I gave Zohar in my class in terms of the links I was able to establish with this pupil. In conceptualising the didactic transfer (2001: 193-219), C. Blanchard-Laville theorized the dual link between teacher and class, the link with the pupils, and also a link with the knowledge to be taught. I quote here an extract from the time t_1 journal concerning Zohar's relationship with knowledge and the hypotheses that may be inferred from the teacher's own relationship with knowledge.

> The beginning of term was forgotten. Rapidly, it became apparent that Zohar was not following the class rhythm. He seemed lost, often complained that he did not have what he needed to work, in particular the necessary sheets of paper. As this

repeated itself, I took a closer look. I discovered that he had only one exercise book where everything was piled in together, one thing following another and in turn, history, geography and science, with no separations. So it was impossible for him to trace documents, texts, maps, summaries… I looked at this exercise book unable to believe my eyes. Nothing seemed to make sense. I recall panicking: I wondered if this boy had his place in the class.

When I re-examine the journal in time t_2, I write:

> Zohar came from another town. He had not finished the year in his former school: I know now that he left well before the summer holidays, and ignorant of the fact that he would not be returning. Zohar used the same exercise book for history, geography and science, whereas other pupils passed from one exercise book to another. History can be understood as a subject with markers in time, whereas geography is applied to markers in space. It seems to me now that that the "history" of Zohar's family had disrupted his "geography": the family had moved rapidly because of personal circumstances judged to be worrying enough to justify the departure. I make the hypothesis that history and geography are traumatically mixed for Zohar.

In the "journal", Zohar's requests concern what the teacher does not give him: "the necessary sheets of paper". There can be seen in this request, elements of paranoid-schizoid functioning, symbolised by the exercise book and the bits of paper. The exercise book serves as a passive receptacle: it fails to hold Zohar's objects of knowledge, and even more to transform them. The capacity for maternal reverie is also compromised in this situation as mess and muddle are played out in the transmission of knowledge. It is partly on the stage of knowledge that personal pain and even trauma are played out between Zohar and the teacher. I sense that the very objects of the knowledge transmitted – history and geography and all that they symbolise - are 'red-hot'. They are impossible to handle, since they closely touch on deep-seated anxieties in the pupil, both personal and familial. In the teaching space, a scenario is played out between teacher and pupil exchanging muddled requests and defensive anxiety (Blanchard-Laville: 2001, 151).

Conclusion

In this paper, I have attempted to show that Zohar's presence endangered my ability to contain the group and constituted an unconscious threat to the group psychic envelope I desired for my pupils. The phrase I wrote in the journal "I wondered if this boy had his place in my class" seems pregnant with meaning in this regard. Zohar communicated to me in his schooling certain elements of his worry of failure but also family trauma. I have attempted to show how that worry reverberated with elements belonging to me: what did Zohar represent for me? Blanchard-Laville emphasises that teachers should disentangle their professional practice and personal history, in particular by engaging in in-depth clinical analysis of professional practice. I have attempted to show what is possible by way of building

psychoanalytic understanding of relationships, thanks to a supportive structure of a clinical kind, and also to this kind of research.

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The Current Educational System as the Enemy of Experiential Learning

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In this paper, I intend to criticise the educational system in its present form as it endorses a type of learning which is detrimental to the development of the students' critical and experiential capacities. I begin by highlighting the problematic assumptions embedded within the 17th and 18th century idea of liberal education, along with its desire to preserve the students' autonomy and their ability to think critically. I then move on to examine the recent developments in education which contribute to compromising students' critical abilities and to reinforcing their passive acceptance of their individual and social fate. I argue that this is accomplished by the current educational system's promotion of a form of pseudo-experience which can be characterised as 'psychoanalysis in reverse'. This diminishes the students' capacity for genuine experiential learning which can only be achieved through the deconstruction of the repressive mechanisms and unconscious resistances that render them impotent to experience anything as immediate and alive.

Let us begin with an account of the historical changes that led to the creation of the current educational system. With the advent of modernity and the age of enlightenment, the identity of experience in the form of a life that is articulated and possesses internal continuity was endangered. The emphasis on the importance of the function of reason was imposed on a traditional culture which had a critical potential embedded in its close relation to nature as well as in its scepticism, wit and irony. In this culture, the elderly were the main 'educational' resource because they embodied a continuity of consciousness, an understanding based on a coherent remembrance of the past. A relatively homogeneous existence gave traditional life the basis of judgement, and the wisdom of the elderly was respected for the experience it contained. However, this experience was also based on a narrow and dogmatic worldview as it resisted anything innovative that could transform and upset its directives. Thus, the education of the intellect was simultaneously a liberation from, and a threat to, this way of life, a release from the chains of dogma and superstition and a danger to the continuation of a shared culture of lived experience which had negative implications for judgement itself.

For this reason, enlightenment thought aimed to replace the judgement of experience with reasoned judgement. This task was assigned to the idea of transformative, comprehensive education, or 'Bildung', operative in 17th and

18th century liberal thought. Thus, rational judgement was meant to be achieved through the cultivation or development of individuals into completely self-determining persons, who are integrated, at home within, and in harmony with their society. In this sense, comprehensive education has always been a form of re-education, an attempt to replace the traditional experience of a coherent existence based on a mimetic, close relationship with nature that has been lost, with a higher, rational unity of moral individuals who pursue their own ends and realise their potentials, using their own understanding without irrelevant external influences. On the basis of this, people were meant to be able confidently to work their way out of the unthinking ordering of their 'animal' existence and state of barbarism, and establish a law-governed social order capable of just and fair action.

This demand for reasoned judgement and self-determination is strongly present in the work of Immanuel Kant who in 1784 responded to the question "What is Enlightenment?" by answering "autonomy" or "emancipation from self-imposed immaturity". By autonomy Kant meant intellectual and moral autonomy. On the one hand, he wanted individuals to transcend the influence of the 'wise' elders, priests and aristocrats and to think for themselves. On the other hand, he wanted them to rise above their desires and act in accordance with moral and intellectual norms that they themselves created by exercising their reason. For Kant, moreover, norms formulated in this way would be universally applicable. Thus, from the Kantian perspective, the role of education was to create 'autonomous' individuals who will be able to overcome their racial, gender and social situations as well as their 'natural' inclinations and desires so as to formulate rational and moral judgements.

However, at the very heart of this liberal idea of education there was a notion of culture which separated the rational and moral from the natural and restricted the cultural to the rational. It also produced a division between mental and manual labour. This separation was the product of the liberal ideology's belief that nature needed to be mastered by beginning to treat and perceive it as though it consisted of extrinsic objects to be manipulated and controlled. The idea of a temporary and playful or mimetic identification with the environment was eclipsed by an identification that grasped the object from a calculated distance. What is important to understand here is that this mastery over nature was accomplished through self-sacrifice. In order to set ourselves apart from nature - so as to control it all the more - we had to learn how to renounce what we shared with nature; that is to say, we had to repudiate the sensuous and material aspects of the self. (See Adorno and Horkheimer, 1986).

Our intellectual freedom was purchased, therefore, at an enormous cost: the internal and external domination of nature. However, as Freud (1915) astutely pointed out in his account of the 'return of the repressed', mutilated nature returned in distorted form to haunt us. Sensuous contact with the environment suppressed by civilization, for instance, touch and smell,

became repulsively alien to us. The subject that was the product of this liberal education betrayed its uncompromising inflexibility in its reaction, for example, to animals, women and the human body. The 'badness' that was therefore attributed to this natural 'other', was in actuality a projection of what remained unsatisfactorily repressed - and what threatened to disrupt the self's identity. Borrowing Freud's (1919) idea of the 'uncanny' [das Unheimliche], we can argue that what seemed abominably alien was in fact all too familiar. The unheimlich characteristics that returned to haunt our mind were the very things that were repressed within this mind. What we despised was really what we secretly longed for (that is, the repressed mimetic closeness to nature).

The liberal idea of education, therefore, that turned on a pedagogic separation of aspects of human existence and presented culture as something disengaged from nature, the body and practical aspects of daily life did not always develop or enhance the capacity for judgement. Divorcing itself from the experience of the body and its natural and social determinants, it often suppressed intellectual capacities even though it had its basis in a culture of rational judgement.

However, despite its problematic character, this liberal idea does not contain only the means to damage culture but is also capable of reinstating the capacity for reflection. In this respect, we should neither sanction this liberal ideology nor discard its conception of autonomy, one which has established conditions for objective judgement and, therefore, for a certain limited notion of subjective freedom.

Due to the separation of the intellectual from social conditions, an independent culture has been developed since the advent of the idea of Bildung, establishing the importance of critical objectivity. In a fragment published as the Theory of Bildung, one of the most significant proponents of liberal education, Wilhelm von Humbolt (1793-4/2000), states that Bildung is about linking the student's self to the world in the "most general, most animated and most unrestrained interplay". However, he also argues that it is crucial that the student... should not lose himself in this alienation, but rather should reflect back into his inner being the clarifying light and comforting warmth of everything that he undertakes outside himself. (von Humbolt, 1793-4/2000, p. 58).

It is this emphasis on self-reflexivity that has the potential of providing a glimmer of hope for genuine autonomy. It is not the autonomy of someone living in a direct and sensuous way, and it does not guarantee the radical transformation of the world, but it at least provides a degree of intellectual freedom. This enables students to refuse to blindly adapt to society's laws, as it develops their capacity for self-determining judgement, encourages their desire to establish a critical distance from prevailing social perspectives, and fosters their need to be honest and decent with themselves and others.

If liberal education reflected the idea of providing the kinds of cultural

experiences to students which fostered their desire to think critically, then a recent development in education, which Adorno (1972) termed 'Halbbildung', translated as 'half-education', produces the desire to comply with the current cultural and social directives. Half-education is that which is left when the conditions of autonomy inherent in liberal education are discarded and integration and conformity become the central focus. This type of education provides students with a set of presumptions which filter their actual existence, offering them a way of dealing with their anxiety by smoothing over any contradictions and tensions generated by a thoughtless adaptation to the social whole. It achieves this by convincing students that the existing social structures will never change while providing stimulation for their tedious and powerless existence.

External institutions like the mass media have contributed to the students' sense of powerlessness and uncritical acceptance by becoming the major influence over both the content of general education and its pedagogical practice. Increasingly, thoughtless adaptation occurs as much outside the formal institutions of teaching and learning as within them. As Adorno (1972) remarked, "What happens in the cultural domain is not the... lack of Bildung [but] is Halbbildung. ... [T]he pre-bourgeois conception of the world ... was destroyed..... Nevertheless, the a priori of the essentially bourgeois concept of culture - autonomy - had no time to develop. Consciousness goes immediately from one heteronomy to another. The bible is replaced ... by the television." (p.99)

And it can just as well be said to have replaced the knowledge conveyed by school teachers or university lecturers. The mass media command the students' undivided attention and their readiness to participate to a far greater degree than any teacher's or lecturer's clever or ingenious teaching plan. Thus, teachers and lecturers feel compelled to use multi-media presentations for the good reason that it has become necessary for them to be 'entertaining' so as to be accepted by students who believe that the only knowledge worth having is the one that has 'entertainment value' attached to it. However, by following this trend, they deny the students the kinds of experiences which could develop their critical and self-reflexive capacities.

In this respect, the mass media type of information provided in contemporary education becomes the mortal enemy of the educational process. It encourages a form of superficial knowledge which produces hatred and resentment against everything that is 'too deep' or 'too complex'. This is because the continuity of consciousness in which everything not present survives, in which practice and association establish lasting temporal links in the students' mind, has now been replaced by the selective, disconnected, interchangeable and ephemeral state of being informed (finding what is 'in' and what is 'out') which will rapidly be cancelled by other, more recent, information.

Consequently, the students' memory becomes very weak as they can only remember what is immediately present. It is as if they live a life where the

memory of a previous event is instantly replaced by the actuality of the next one. Absence and lack are not recognised or tolerated as they are constantly negated by an eternal presence. Thus, their actions are motivated neither by a sense of who they were, in the past, nor by what they are missing in the present, nor by what they would like to be in the future, but by a pseudo-immediacy which ultimately signifies a collapse of critical consciousness into the mass consciousness of our consumer society.

Here psychoanalysis should be utilized to examine the active exclusion of critical consciousness and the generation of psychological blocks to memory and self-reflexivity. It could also help us understand how the educational ideal of 'hardness' (i.e., the belief that the student can only achieve a strong moral character if s/he manages to endure the maximum degree of pain and hardship), in which many may believe without reflecting about it, is completely erroneous. This is because this process of instilling discipline and moral strength can become a screen-image for masochism that, as psychoanalysis has established, can easily turn into sadism and produce subjects who are incapable of feeling guilt for the pain they are inflicting on others. As Adorno (1998) states in his essay "Education after Auschwitz": Being hard, the vaunted quality education should inculcate, means absolute indifference toward pain as such. In this the distinction between one's own pain and that of another is not so stringently maintained. Whoever is hard with himself earns the right to be hard with others as well and avenges himself for the pain whose manifestations he was not allowed to show and had to repress. (p.199).

Moreover, psychoanalytic ideas should be used to examine how the educational system's endorsement of 'coldness' (i.e., its promotion of emotional distance and lack of empathy) produces students who are deeply indifferent towards whatever happens to everyone else except themselves. For example, the educational system in its present form places far more emphasis on the students' successful completion of a series of competitive exams than on the development of their ability to empathically relate to others, promoting thus the relentless pursuit of their own individual interests against the interests of everyone else. This has settled into the character of students, to their innermost core, and contributes to the modern subjects' lack of concern for other people's distress and a sense of isolation through the creation of an unquenchable appetite for competition. The only reaction to this process is the so-called 'lonely crowd', "a banding together of people completely cold who cannot endure their own coldness and yet cannot change it". (Adorno, 1998, p.201). It is no accident, therefore, that there is a proliferation of 'reality' TV shows like Big Brother, The Apprentice, The X Factor, etc., that blatantly illustrate how extremely narcissistic and emotionally distant individuals have to pretend to get along with each other and work as a team so as to win the TV competition.

Thus, modern groups are formed through coldness, i.e., through the absence of libidinal investments - in contrast to Freud's (1921) belief that

groups are created through the establishment of intense libidinal bonds between its members. In the reduction of intersubjective relationships to indifferent connections between objects, coldness results in the development of a consciousness that is characterized by "a rage for organization, by the inability to have any immediate human experiences at all, by a certain lack of emotion, by an overvalued realism" (Adorno, 1998, p.198). As such, modern subjectivity is devoid of emotional resonance and incapable of recognising difference or the value of affectionate bonds.

However, as the current educational system plays such a crucial role in the creation of this 'unemotional' subject, it can also attempt to invert this process by working against the psychological and social preconditions that produce this character structure. In order to accomplish this, its teaching practices should be altered in such a way as to discourage the naturalization of hardness and coldness as educational virtues. One might think that this can be accomplished by giving more warmth and love to students. However, students who have no idea of the coldness and hardness of social life are then truly traumatized by the cruelty of it when they must leave their protected educational environment. If anything can help against hardness and coldness, then it is the students' understanding of the conditions that determine them and the attempt to fight those conditions. The first thing therefore is to bring hardness and coldness to the consciousness of themselves, of the reasons why they arose. Thus, the educational system must take seriously an idea which is familiar to psychoanalysis: that anxiety should not be repressed. As Adorno (1998) puts it: When anxiety is not repressed, when one permits oneself to have, in fact, all the anxiety that this reality warrants, then precisely by doing that, much of the destructive effect of unconscious and displaced anxiety will probably disappear. (p.198).

In this case, anxiety is a productive signal that the 'hard' and 'cold' character structure of the modern student/subject is no longer working properly, and that s/he is close to understanding the unbearable truth which his/her character formation attempts to conceal. As such, anxiety is the most powerful educational affect for exploring the psychological contents petrified by hardness and frozen over by coldness and its social determinants. (See also Lewis, 2006).

However, is it possible to establish a psychoanalytically-inspired learning culture which would allow students to creatively explore their anxieties when recent developments in education regard 'student satisfaction' as the only relevant measure of teaching quality? In other words, how could students be encouraged to examine the reasons behind their dissatisfaction with the 'cold', instrumental logic of the market when these recent developments suggest that teachers and lecturers should be 'service providers' who need to keep their students 'satisfied' by fulfilling their 'consumerist' demand for accumulation of educational assets so as to increase their marketability and future employability prospects? In a recent article for the London Review of Books, Stefan Collini (2010) succinctly summarises this dilemma: I would

hope the students I teach come away with certain kinds of dissatisfaction (including with themselves: a 'satisfied' student is nigh-on ineducable), and it matters more that they carry on wondering about the source of that dissatisfaction than whether they 'liked' the course or not. This is another respect in which the 'consumer' model is simply misleading, an error encouraged by the prevalence in current edspeak of the category of 'the student experience' (p.24).

These thoughtful remarks seem to indicate that it is absolutely crucial for us to resist the application of this 'consumer' model of education which promotes this superficial category of 'student experience'. They also imply that a genuine 'student experience' should not be based on the renunciation of the students' 'dissatisfaction' with the current educational and social systems and the anxiety they produce. In this respect, a psychoanalytic understanding of anxiety can provide the guidelines for a new education not based on renunciation and repression but on insight, an education to be worked out in the future.

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Using Psychodynamic Ideas in Teaching and Research

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Introduction

This article arises out of recognition of the importance of psychoanalytic theory in both our approaches to teaching and research. We demonstrate how such ideas – broadly defined as encouraging people to engage more closely with thoughts and feelings that may be hidden from the conscious mind – can be applied in many, diverse, and radical ways. But also how such an approach can be problematical both for students, teachers and researchers. In writing this paper, we suggest that entering the territory between therapeutic and educational processes and ideas can be deeply rewarding, empowering if also, at times, difficult for teachers, researchers and learners alike.

Our teaching and research

We have both used a psychodynamic approach to teaching and research in higher and adult education for many years. Celia convened a Masters programme on the use of creative writing as a developmental and therapeutic tool at Sussex University for 14 years. People took this programme to strengthen their creative writing through a deeper engagement with self, to explore life transitions, or to acquire skills to work with others in education and health and social care. Part of the work was experiential, involving self-exploration through imagery and metaphor, and re-writing of personal narratives using fiction. Whilst this was not therapy in the strict sense, there was a strong therapeutic dimension to students' studies, but they also developed conceptual understandings of their writing process, drawing on psychodynamic, literary and cultural theory. So the learning involved was both emotional and cognitive, often identifying and working through subtle difficulties in learning to write creatively. Linden has used psychodynamic ideas in Masters and Doctoral programmes in developing auto/biographical reflections and research methodology. This includes exploring the role of the researcher, professional guidance worker or doctor, in shaping, sometimes unconsciously, what the 'other' might say (e.g. West 1996; 2001; 2004; 2009).In his research, he has explicitly used psychodynamic ideas in interpreting aspects of his own life history as part of interrogating the auto/biographical dimensions of research. Gender, and experiences of selfhood, as well as the interplay of desire and resistance in

learning, have similarly emerged as important themes in his work.

Both of us are strongly influenced by object relations' theorists. Linden draws on Melanie Klein, Donald Winnicott and Wilfred Bion, noting their growing influence in social theory and in thinking about transitional processes in learning; as well as the contribution they have made to understanding the deeply contingent, developmental and often defended nature of subjectivity, in contrast to the one-dimensional, cognitively driven, information processing subject of much conventional social science (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000; Froggett, 2002). He has adopted the term 'psychosocial' to describe this psychodynamically informed perspective, which recognises the importance of the socio-cultural in shaping subjectivity while not reducing psyche to a simplistic epiphenomenal status. Learning and the subject called the learner are, in this view, both social and psychological at the same time: social in that subjectivity, including the capacity to learn and to remain open to experience, is forged in our intimate interactions with significant others; which, in turn, is shaped by the structuring forces of class, gender and ethnicity, for instance, and the discourses of power that pervade them. Social too in that our engagement with new social networks as well as experiences of learning frequently lead to a questioning of who we are and might want to be, and whether we are able to embrace change. But psyche has its own inner dynamic, grounded in inter-subjective life. Not everyone, in similar 'objective' situations, responds in the same way to oppressive experience. Some, more than others, remain open and creative in the face of difficulties, while others may retreat into defensiveness, paranoia and even fundamentalism (Frosh, 1991; Giddens, 1999).

Celia draws on Winnicott, too, but also on Christopher Bollas and Marion Milner. Her main influence though is the German/American psychoanalyst Karen Horney, whose work explores how we erect psychological defence mechanisms against anxiety and in the process lose touch with spontaneous feelings, which Horney identifies as the core of our self-experience (Horney, 1954). Celia has used these theories in her research to understand the effects of such defences on the learning process and how exploring oneself through creative life writing can help to alleviate learning blocks and difficulties (e.g. Hunt, 2000; 2002; 2004; 2010). Horney was deeply concerned with the effects of cultural factors on the development of the personality, but she also believed that the personality could be looked at as having its own dynamic, which can render the individual his or her own worst enemy. Following Horney, Celia believes that there is a value in focusing on the individual psyche when thinking about the learning process, but that it is also important to think about how social, cultural and historical contexts contribute to individual experience.

For both of us, adult learning occupies a kind of 'border country' straddling emotion and cognition, the social and psychological, self and other, education and therapy. Here are examples of our approaches:

Celia: *I am currently writing up research into the learning process of students taking the MA Creative Writing and Personal Development. What is striking is how many people report a more open and flexible sense of themselves as a result of this programme.At the start of the study many of the students taking part identified blocks to, or difficulties with, their creative writing. These typically included difficulties with creating fictional first person narrators or third person characters out of themselves; with imbuing their fiction with felt, emotional life; or with finding a writing identity for creative writing, particularly where they already had a strong academic or non-fiction writing identity.*

Already by the end of their first course – an experiential course, within a literary and psychodynamic conceptual framework, and with a large component of collaborative peer learning – many of these students were reporting significant changes and developments in their sense of themselves as writers and learners. Anne, for example, a freelance non-fiction writer, came with a strong professional identity, which seemed to be inhibiting the development of her creative writing. She had high expectations for her creative writing, but once it was on the page, it made her 'cringe'; she didn't recognise it as belonging to her, maybe, she suggested, 'because I don't want to own it'. She also noted a certain perfectionism at work ('There's… a part of me that wants to complete all tasks! And precisely!'), combined with premature judgement on the material emerging, which was detrimental to developing a freer, more chaotic process of creative writing.

The combination of emotional, cognitive and collaborative learning in that first course helped Anne to start uncovering and finding a shape for strongly felt personal material, in particular deep and previously censored feelings about her chronically ill sister. She describes one piece of writing about her sister's destructiveness towards her as 'a statement…that has taken me my entire life, as her younger sibling, to make'. Moving out of the safe boundaries of her non-fiction identity through the use of metaphor and fictional techniques, and through developing a relationship with a small and safe group of peer readers, she began to understand that developing an identity as a creative writer involved embracing a more relational sense of herself, which was quite different from the strongly self-contained person she felt herself to be as a non-fiction writer: 'My sense of self and of myself as a writer is linked in to my roles… as sister, daughter, aunt, partner and so on'. She was not yet ready to reveal herself fully to an external reader, but felt that she was: 'learning to allow myself to write both from, and about, me, while trusting myself to read [myself] without critical judgement. This is basic scrub clearing, which I hope will lead to clarity in my writing and a warm willingness to feel freer with the notion of an external reader'.

Summing up what she felt she had learned by the end of the first course, Anne said: 'I have finally given myself permission to extend my writing beyond its tight boundaries and what I write is giving myself permission to

be me'. The psychodynamic approach to teaching that this course involved clearly enabled Anne to expand her sense of herself, beyond the narrow confines of a safe but inhibiting self-identity, and to start using more of herself, particularly her felt, emotional self, in her writing.

Linden*: I've been researching, over many years, the experiences of families living in different marginalized communities and the nature of their interactions with a range of family support programmes, such as Sure Start. Joe and Heidi, for instance, and their two children, were part of a 'biographical' and longitudinal study of a Sure Start project, which was designed to chronicle and collaboratively interpret experiences through their eyes, as well as those of other families (and staff on the ground). We wanted to know the extent to which families such as Heidi and Joe's felt supported or threatened, empowered or disempowered, by such projects. Heidi got involved in her local Sure Start project in different ways, such as attending parent support sessions, a playgroup (with the children) and adult classes.*

They were understandably cautious about seeing us, as researchers, although agreed to do so and were very reticent about talking. They eventually shared experiences, over time, in some depth. She and Joe had known each other since childhood. They had both been abandoned, went into residential homes, followed by periods in foster care. The material poured out as Heidi described being moved from one family to another. She had never been able to talk to anyone about her life history before, she stated. It was hard to explain, and she did 'not really understand myself why the things that had happened had happened, and not knowing how or where to start'.

She told us that the courses 'gave me more confidence to know what to do with my two children'.She suffered from mental health problems, she explained, and began to talk about being upset with her children, 'when they laugh at me'. Sure Start had been very threatening, at first: they were afraid that people might be 'checking' on them and 'that was going through our heads all the time'. They were frightened of their children being put in care, like they were. They filled the fridge with food and bought new clothes for the children, whenever a Sure Start worker, or for that matter a researcher, came near, despite being unable to afford it. But the relationship to Sure Start shifted, however contingently – as did the research relationship – from suspicion to some trust. Heidi, especially, felt empowered.

Heidi talked about the importance of contact with other mothers and particular workers: 'like one big family really'. She referred to particular people as 'the mums I never had' and felt understood and more legitimate in the eyes of significant others. There was physical relief at getting out of the house, at having a temporal structure to the week, and having access to adult conversations. These processes are not to be judged simply in

individualistic terms: time and again understanding that other parents had difficulties controlling their children, or with their own irritation and anger, provided a sense of relief and helped build self-confidence. We asked Joe and Heidi about the research and they said it was 'good' to be able to share their stories and to weave strands together, in ways they had not done previously, as they linked their own histories of abandonment with intense suspicions of authority at all levels. But they felt listened to and valued by us, too, even when talking about disturbing things, in what became, however briefly, a storytelling, meaning-making, and, to an extent, therapeutic research process. Feeling understood can work at a very primitive emotional level.

As these two examples demonstrate, a psychodynamic approach to teaching and research can lead to empowerment and a stronger sense of identity. However, it can also lead us, and those we work with, into a potentially muddled and messy territory. The process of storytelling about a life and reflexively seeking to understand it and what it feels like to be oneself can encompass disturbed and disturbing experiences.

Risks of a Psychodynamic Approach to Teaching and Research and Their Containment

As we have indicated, a psychodynamic approach to teaching and research is not without its risks. Research or teaching does not provide the long-term support available in therapeutic settings once repressed material has surfaced. Educators may not be equipped to handle certain dynamics such as transference and counter-transference or know what to do when a student encounters challenging personal material. They are clearly not there as therapists. Working in the 'border country' between education and therapy has been challenging for both of us. It has involved taking risks and learning progressively which risks we can take and which we perhaps should not. This has helped us to begin to frame some of the issues more clearly and to explore the relationship between subjectivity and inter-subjective processes. It has also helped us to understand better what is involved in creating 'containment' (Bion, 1962) or a safe-enough 'holding environment' (Winnicott, 1971).

In the MA in Creative Writing and Personal Development containment began already at the interview stage, where Celia as convener had to make judgements about who was likely to be able to manage the kinds of learning the programme involved, and to make sure people were aware that reflecting deeply on themselves might give rise to challenging material. Tutors were expected to have therapeutic training, to equip them to deal better with emotional learning. Back-up support mechanisms, provided by student advisors and counselling services, were also crucial for referring students if problems arose.

There were also important methods of containment within the teaching itself, the most important being the use of collaborative peer groups. In the first two courses people were assigned to such groups for the sharing of creative writing, and these groups remained constant for each course. At their best these small groups ' gelled' in such a way that students built trust, with the members acting as supportive audience to each other's developing writing and sense of self. The creative writing in progress itself provided an element of containment for sometimes difficult personal experience, a way of being simultaneously close to and distanced from the material in Winnicott's 'potential space' (Winnicott, 1971). Students' emerging conceptual understanding of their writing and learning process, through the study of theory, also framed and therefore contained their experience. So as the MA progressed, they were thinking about themselves and their experience both from inside and outside. Of course none of these measures can ever be foolproof, but they can reduce the potential for damage.

Our psychodynamic approach to research builds on the life history or biographical approach - what is sometimes known, following Liz Stanley (1992), as 'auto/biography' - which embraces the idea of relationship and a dynamic co-creation of text or story. Our perception of research is in part a reaction against methods which can freeze people's experiences into pre-determined frames, sometimes provoking intense resentment amongst those 'under investigation', such as in the use of standardised instruments in psychological research (West, 1996).Jerome Bruner (1990) says that people narrativise their experience of the world, if given an opportunity to do so, yet most conventional interviews expect respondents to answer questions in the categorical form required in formal exchanges rather than the narratives of natural conversation. Using auto/biographical methods, and being sensitive to the emotional content of stories, allows deeply personal narratives into the research frame and yet it can take the researcher into difficult territory. Sometimes the people we work with are unused to being listened to attentively and material can simply pour out (West, 2006). There is a danger too of being seduced into playing the role of the therapist.

In a research context a holding or containing framework can in part be provided through the use of ethical codes or ground rules clearly explaining the purpose of a particular piece of research, spelling out rights and responsibilities. The building of an alliance is also part of the containing process, analogous to the therapeutic alliance in psychotherapy. This involves establishing trust (partly a consequence of someone feeling understood as well as cared for) alongside the clear ground rules (which will include a statement that the process is not psychotherapy, however problematical, in reality, this distinction might be).

The responses and self-understanding of the researcher are also central to containment: including the capacity to understand, process and feed back what may be difficult issues, in digestible form. And also to be aware of boundary issues: this relies on a capacity – central to psychotherapeutic

training – to be both absorbed in the other's story while also retaining a sense of detachment and the ability to think about what might be happening in the relationship and storytelling; and thus able to make informed judgments about what may appropriately be dealt with and what is best left alone. In this sense, research, like writing groups, can be seen as a sort of secure, transitional, playful space in which narrative risks can be taken, but in appropriate ways.

Questions of Defences and Interpretations

There remains a question about the extent to which, in teaching or research, attention can or should be drawn to people's defences, by, for instance, reference to what may be happening in creative writing or biographical narrative interviews. Psychoanalytic psychotherapy has identified a whole range of defences that can come into play within and between people, and in relation to symbolic activity. In psychotherapy the point of the exercise, in the context of an alliance, is to identify and challenge defences, because they have not worked for people and life may feel empty and meaningless. The therapist digests what may be happening – including attacks on the process itself – and seeks to feed this back in a manageable form, in the context of what is often a long-term relationship.

In research or educational settings it may simply be inappropriate to challenge defensive mechanisms, such as intellectualisation, denial or avoidance. On the other hand, there can be highly appropriate ways of exploring such dynamics. A student's reflective essay, for example, that is overly intellectual and distant from feelings can be discussed in terms of working in a different genre, using poetry or art. This partly depends on the spirit in which the problem is communicated and the extent to which associated anxieties are contained by the tutor's responses and suggestions. If done well, rich dialogue on the nature of learning itself and how and why we may defend against certain kinds of more imaginative activities can result.

The notion of free association may be important here, in the sense of encouraging people to say whatever comes into their head, however apparently unrelated material might be. The theory is of course that this provides access to unconscious experience that may be difficult to articulate. Letting go of conscious thought and control often lies at the heart of symbolic meaning-making processes. There is a ubiquitous need to loosen up, play and dream as well as imagine, for creativity as well as health. Winnicott (1971) talked of the importance of an intermediate or transitional space in creativity and learning; a space between dreaming and reality, self and other, me and not quite me. Such imaginative and emotional possibilities are there in adult learning too, but careful professional judgement and self-awareness are always required.

The Applicability of these Approaches to Other Areas of Teaching and Research

Clearly the in-depth psychodynamic approaches we adopt in our work are not going to be appropriate to all areas of teaching and research. For example, the psychodynamic approach to teaching adopted in the MA at Sussex was built into the structure and content of the whole programme, and in certain kinds of work a therapeutic training will be essential. However, attention can be drawn to the emotional dimensions of learning in any learning context. At a basic level, providing space for people to talk openly at the outset of a course about their fears of embarking on new learning, especially when those people are entering higher education for the first time, can be beneficial in helping them to think about their learning processes and the kinds of learning they will be doing in this particular course. It is also possible to introduce a psychodynamic approach into student learning through reflecting, via writing exercises that use metaphor and fictionalising, on the role of the self in the learning process. Such an approach can create a hybrid teaching environment, both seminar and 'play space', where students can learn to put more of themselves into their essays and develop their reflexivity as learners (Creme and Hunt 2002). Making people more aware that there are different dimensions of learning, not only the cognitive, but also the emotional, imaginal and social helps to provide a framework within which the often chaotic experience of learning can be rendered intelligible and safe.

In a research context a psychodynamic approach can contribute a valuable additional dimension to qualitative work in the social sciences. As Hollway and Jefferson demonstrated in their research into the fear of crime (2000), looking at social phenomena simultaneously from a psychodynamic and social perspective can reveal how internal factors often compound external ones. This can lead to a radically different understanding of how social ills might be addressed. A similar point applies to research in education, where a psychodynamic approach combined with other perspectives can provide both an inside and an outside view of the processes involved in teaching and learning.

Conclusion

We suggest that a psychodynamic approach, carefully and thoughtfully employed in suitable contexts, can help diverse people to work through blocks or difficulties with learning and to move towards less rigid, more reflexive selves, more open to the change and development that significant learning always involves. It can help us as educators constantly to challenge ourselves to build more awareness of embodied experience and of what we are doing in our roles as teachers and researchers and in the process to

bring more of ourselves into our work and gain deeper satisfaction, meaning as well as connectedness.

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Training Psychologists: learning from emotions in the university context

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Introduction

This paper reflects on some aspects of the learning processes of students studying on a Master's level Degree programme in Dynamic, Clinical and Community Psychology. We believe that emotional, relational and personal dimensions are all involved in the specific choice of becoming clinical psychologists as well as in the training process. We also think that teaching clinical psychology cannot be only a sort of theoretical transfer of abstract knowledge since it necessarily needs self-reflection. Finally, the clinical work cannot be limited to a "practice" whether supported by theories, methodology and procedures because the clinical work is, above all, a *working-through* the relationship (between client and psychologist), in which the psychologist's personal experiences are implicated. We therefore believe that university curricula should include an experiential dimension, which fundamentally provides an *experience-based learning* (Bion, 1962) programme. By this we mean the possibility of space to experience one's emotions and to reflect upon them in order to improve one's capacity both for self-reflection and to generate deeper levels of understanding.

Intellectual functions are connected with emotional experience, and there is a profound connection between the emotions and the capacity to learn and perform the function of thought (Blandino, 1997). The focus of psychoanalysis on the apprehension of an emotional dimension has powerful meaning in the daily practice of teaching and training. Learning evokes and embodies internal tensions, difficulties and pain that we have to consider, including from the teacher's point of view, if we are to look at the whole picture in terms of what learning and thinking actually are.

Practice of psychology, practice of emotions

We want to carefully consider the cyclical nature of the learning processes taking into account all the levels of learning. In particular we wish to look at the learning process of a student on a Clinical Psychology programme. For the reasons implied above, we adjusted the academic teaching to introduce *experience-based learning* that included the student's emotional dimensions in clinical work, thus to encourage the learning process through engaging

with and working through experience. This paper will consider these implications by presenting some extracts from observations and materials collected during our experimental lessons. The work involved a group of students in clinical psychology who have some theoretical and short practical experience of the psychoanalytic methods of infant observation.

To put this into context, it is important to note the characteristics of this Master's programme and the related training requirements for psychotherapists and psychologists in Italy. The Master's programme is an academic training that lasts 5 years. It is usually followed by a one-year-long apprenticeship, such as a post-degree professional training, followed by an examination to qualify for professional practice and become a member of the psychologists' professional association. Only graduated students with an additional 4-year-long specialization can practice psychotherapy. Education, in the normal practice of clinical psychology, follows three different directions: Carli et al. (2007) suggest these are fundamentally separated: the theoretical, the practical and personal training and development.

The theoretical and practical education takes place in the university context, whereas the personal training, such as in the psychoanalytical approach, is usually realized in different contexts. It seems very difficult to bring together the practical and the theoretical dimensions of education. However, we think that by providing experiential learning, for example, through a dramatization, with a role-playing game of psychological consulting scenarios, it becomes more possible to straddle some of the divisions. We suggest that this kind of learning experience allows the students to manage concepts, instruments and notions in action, through themselves, as part of an individual and group experience.

Additionally, the teaching process that we have devised includes both theoretical and practical lessons, providing a 'creative game' in a 'potential space' (Winnicott, 1965). The students are better able to move from a theoretical position and to confront a range of clinical scenarios within the experimental sessions. Our teaching programme for students attending the last year of the Master's Degree programme in Dynamic, Clinical and Community Psychology is specifically centred on aspects of the psychoanalytical theory of gender difference: of the feminine and the maternal questions and theoretical explanation is always accompanied by guided practical experiences, structured in two phases:

• A role-playing session dramatizing clinical scenarios observed and reported by a psychoanalytical observer.

• Group discussions with the teacher's supervision, which includes all the student observers' contributions.

Clinical vignettes

The teacher proposes to dramatize a psychologist-client relationship moving from a theoretical approach towards the maternal and the childhood psycho-sexual development, which are discussed during the lesson. Two students, a male and a female, offer to participate. The student (male), taking the role of the client, talks about his difficulties in studying. He talks of his mother's excessive expectations, which prevent him from pursuing his academic studies. He goes on to say that he is undertaking the Master's Degree programme in Psychology against his parents' wishes, who just wanted him to be an attorney. He is now about to finish his course and he feels it is impossible to continue with his studies and to tell his parents that he is experiencing problems with the last examinations. The atmosphere is claustrophobic, nobody moves.

The female student, acting as the psychoanalyst, remains silent for a long time, whereas the student-client continues to talk of his anxieties: the anguish of being not able, the fear of abandoning his studies, the dread of a no-way-out situation The student-psychoanalyst, chuckling and shrugging, invites him to explore the origins of his anxiety, which seems linked to a relationship with his mother. The student-client says that he feels his mother to be a gigantic figure, with great powers, from which he cannot break free: "I hate my mother, she takes care of everything and I must be her perfect son, I must be everything, everything she desires". The psychologist tries to develop the discussion by looking at what the client really wants. This appears mixed up, in an ambivalent way, with his mother's desires; it appears in the background as a relational dynamic of confusion and fusion with an overall maternal figure, which leads the client to a constant and complex opposition to his mother.

After the dramatization phase the teacher invites the student group to share their impressions and to talk about themselves. Some students reveal that they have experienced similar problems, including the student-psychoanalyst: she too feels constrained in continuing her university examinations. This theme, so full of personal emotions and interests for the whole group, immediately causes the student-psychoanalyst to distance herself from the relationship and to face the client's urgency by chuckling and shrugging. In her moves she expresses the embarrassment and her impotency in a difficult situation, which she also deeply shares with the client.

The group discussion continues on themes of fusion and of the impossibility of escape from the overwhelming mother (such as in the pre-oedipal phase). Mostly, the focus is on the deep emotional interests that the role play has evoked in the students, who share both the problem of university examinations and the struggle between the adult desire for autonomy and the young (still very real) dependency on their family. Some students report their deep feelings of being taken over and paralyzed by this theme, an important aspect of the involvement on which the teacher invites them to

reflect. The student-client's involvement in the relationship with the mother seems to mirror the student-psychoanalyst's internal relations, her own problems and difficulties, which can hinder comprehension and the therapeutic process. The student-psychoanalyst also reveals that she did not know what to do and how to answer positively in relation to the pressing client's requests. The problems of being at university also seem to be highlighted in the dramatization of a second situation presented some weeks after, following a different narrative on themes of separation and loss.

The student taking on the role of the client initiates the subject of graduation and the uncertainty relating to the crucial and extremely difficult task of separating from the family, having "… found a second home" at university. The psychoanalyst-student listens to him silently and tries to respond to the client's difficulties by evoking the image of the door at home. "You are on your home doorstep and you do not know if you have to or want to enter or exit". The narration continues by developing the student-client's request to be helped in actively doing something, in deciding what to do. The student-client talks of the darkness, the empty space of an "after" that is almost impossible to imagine. The student-psychoanalyst proposes that a consultation would help him analyse the most pressing elements of his problem but this meets with scepticism in the student-client: "And then what happens? We have these psychological talks and then?" The student-psychoanalyst proposes three or four sessions but is continually pushed back by the client's questions; he insistently asks "three or four sessions? And then what happens? What will we do?" The dramatization ends after a short time, while the student-psychoanalyst is trying to open a space for reflection; a space that seems insufficient and inadequate. What kind of space is the student-client trying to compose? Where should it be located? In this situation the time of the psychological consultation becomes an undefined space-container.

After the dramatization the student-psychoanalyst's difficulties in managing the student-client's problem are highlighted and analysed while the student-client reveals that he strongly feels these difficulties: and for this reason he has asked the university student psychological consulting service to offer him four sessions. The girl who played the psychoanalyst does not participate in the group discussion – one that is centred on uncertain and precarious elements - which all the students are worried about, because of anticipating the end of their university courses. The precariousness that the student-psychoanalyst shares with her colleagues is then transferred in the dramatization of her position as a psychoanalyst. The group is mostly silent, almost overwhelmed by its own sense of destiny.

Conclusions

As shown above, through this kind of learning the student can encounter the difficulties in the psychoanalyst's position, directly experiencing the role

played by subjectivity and inter-subjectivity, in the clinical sessions. The role-playing seems to create a potential and transitional space (Winnicott, 1971) in which usual roles have to be suspended and the boundaries between reality and fiction dissolved and confused. In this case, the experiential dimension allows learning from the experience of one's subjectivity in a guided and protected space. It seems to act as a transitional space: facilitating feelings of new possibility and spontaneity, where everyone can simultaneously act 'me and not-me' at the same time. In fact, the creation of a transitional area where the boundary between the subject and the role being impersonated is not so clear, allows aspects of the role of psychoanalyst - that need to be identified and analysed - to be brought into the room. This area then contains both personal and group aspects, which stimulate the need for reflection. This dimension of practical experience evokes processes of group mirroring which sometimes accompany persecutory anxieties: "I felt I was the student that could not take examinations", the student-psychologist says in the first vignette. Another student in the group then adds "I thought he was speaking about me".

Therefore, the space of dramatization also becomes a container for original and precocious elements, for anguish and anxieties that are taking place in the others' narration. The possibility for sharing through the group experience allows emotions to be experienced, but also for thinking about less symbolized elements, which demand to be named and given meaning. In fact, the space of dramatization, as a creative transitional playing zone, also allows indigestible elements, needing to be digestible, to emerge. Finally, psychoanalytic theory is brought alive by the group experience: we can find diverse aspects that need to be integrated through a difficult and laborious work, which is both necessary and potentially transformative.

In this situation, the teacher can help the students recognize the emotional dynamics which may beset them in their work as psychoanalysts, and interfere with their ability to listen to and understand the other, their client. From this perspective, the educational process that we have described appears to be an experience where it is possible to be in contact with one's subjectivity, which can either enable or disturb listening and comprehension. What the student-psychologist feels in the dramatization is partially linked to her/his inner world and to what the student-client deposits in him/her self. The concept of projective identification becomes a real notion that is like a mark on the skin for the student: it can be felt and understood through this experience.

Moreover, these role-playing experiences provide evidence of the difficulties associated with the psychology based practices and professions. The student is able to learn from her/his own experience some of the risks, the anxieties, the issues emerging in clinical work and the importance of all those aspects that define the internal and external world of psychological settings. Finally, there is an anticipatory dimension: these role-plays enable

students to experience, at first hand, some of the tensions and difficulties inherent in the role of a professional psychologist. The student is able to learn from her/his own experience, aspects of these risks, of the anxieties, and a range of issues emerging in the clinical work; and of their importance in defining the psychological setting.

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Good-enough or omnipotent trainers

Jean-Luc Rinaudo

Psychopathology of everyday virtual life

This research uses a psychoanalytic perspective to analyse the application of information and communication technologies in teacher training. Research in the field of computer supported learning and teaching based on a broad range of methodologies and approaches including a psychoanalytically oriented clinical approach provides diverse results. One of the major points of disagreement relates to how researchers examine the effect of technologies on the users. For example, according to Turkle (2005), computers and video games are relational artefacts and can be considered as evocative objects that automatically offer a transitional space for users. This paper illustrates how my research – based on the psychopathology of everyday life (Freud, 1901) and everyday virtual life (Missonnier, 2006) – ICT could be considered both as a transitional or negative object (Rinaudo, 2009).

This paper is based on various situations collected in Calico, a French scientific network, where researchers from different fields (such as, computer science, psychology, sociology, linguistics, educational sciences) and with different epistemologies and different points of view come together to examine the uses of computer supported collaborative learning and online discussion groups for training. For example, when I analyse a forum using a psychoanalytical approach and observe relationships in groups, fellow researchers will, in turn, look for knowledge and professional understanding. When I focus upon the unconscious process of group mentality (Bion, 1962) they focus upon how the group approaches work. This provides a broad perspective on the complexity of the learners, and the teachers' practice with online technologies.

Context of teacher training in France

It is important to mention some specific points about the context of teacher training in France. Presently, students who want to become teachers have to pass an examination at the end of their first year at a college of education (IUFM). If they are successful in this they become civil servants and are able to go onto the second year at IUFM. During this second year they are students at a training institute for part of the time and teachers in

classrooms for part of the time. Throughout the year teachers are responsible for one or two classes in middle school or high school. Very often, this situation leads to a tension between experience in the classroom and the activities at the training institution.

Alongside this, teachers have to pass a certificate that evaluates their ability to used computers and the Internet for teaching. It is called C2i2e for "Certificat informatique et internet niveau 2 enseignement", which could be translated as the "Certificate for computer and Internet level 2 for teaching" (Loisy & Rinaudo, 2007). In order to reduce the tension between experience in the classroom and activities at the college of education, to change young teachers' perceptions, and also to facilitate the use of technologies, trainers often work collaboratively although at a distance by using a virtual platform.. This is to help them to keep in touch with the trainees during their periods in the classroom

Online discussion groups

I will now focus upon the trainers' practices using online asynchronous discussion groups at a college of education. I shall call these online groups 'didactical online discussion groups' and will describe some of their distinctive features.Firstly, these groups are closed: the groups are only for the trainees and their trainers. This characteristic is most important: these groups already exist in the real life, before they begin online exchanges, in virtual space. So, feelings and relationships are soon involved when the forum begins; and the mentality of the group in real life provides the basis for the mentality of the e-group (Leroux, 2007).

These e-discussion groups are prescribed and time limited as the group is created by the trainers and the trainees are required to participate in thematic forums. For example, the trainees debate about evaluation in classroom and especially about the use of unexpected tests. Some trainees argue that these unexpected evaluations are good for pupils because they learn on a regular basis and yet they do not interact with the discussion when the others think that these evaluations disturb the confidential relationship between themselves and the pupils.

But the most important fact for this paper is that the trainers do not often write any messages. The trainers will write at the beginning of the forum to assign work. After that, they did not debate with trainees, which created the impression that they were never online. For example, in an electronic forum, the two trainers posted two messages, at the beginning, and then the 18 trainees wrote 90 messages. Furthermore, the length of the trainers' message is shorter than the trainees' messages. However, despite the fact that trainers never write in the online discussion groups, the trainees think that they are really online and sense their presence. This could be seen when trainees address messages to them, which were nothing to do with the topic of the debate. For example, "Mr X, you said that you would contact me

before coming in my classroom. If this is the case, please contact me and I'll send you our schedule because it is a bit complicated". These types of messages are signs of the trainers' presence (Jacquinot, 2002). Trainers could be considered both as absent, because they do not write any messages, and, at the same time, present, because they probably read them. This being there/not being there position is certainly strange for the trainees.

In e-learning both distance and presence are crucial. With the development of e-learning and the use of ICT for training, researchers considered distance as an innovation. According to Henri and Kaye (1985), distance was central to the pedagogical relationship. Jacquinot (1993) listed different kinds of distance. She argues that spatial, temporal, technological, social, cultural and economic distances must be "tameable" by teachers and learners. According to her, with e-learning, engineers and teachers must find how to compensate for the loss of 'co-presence'. Recently Ardouin (2007) observed an online master's degree and in particular what students feel. He concluded that with e-learning the most important element, according to them, is presence.

Psychoanalytical approach

However working with the notion of absence is a problem for scientists - what can we do when we do not have any data? As trainers do not write, I have to use a different approach. A psychoanalytical approach offers us a potentially useful perspective because it is built on the default, the blank, the what is not said as well as the spoken, or the work of the negative (Green, 1993). The psychoanalytically oriented clinical approach is perhaps the only way to have a good knowledge of the trainers' position on e-groups. My choice of a psychoanalytical approach is the result of a long reflexive process, as a result of which I believe that this theoretical and clinical approach provides illuminating concepts to use in the analysis of everyday virtual life in teaching and learning.

Omnipotent trainers

It is suggested that, unconsciously, trainers try to keep omnipotent control on trainees, even if they hide this fact behind good pedagogical reasons. With an e-learning platform, trainers can extend their omnipotence. As distance is not an issue they can keep in contact with their trainees when they are teaching away from the college, just as if they were still in the college of education. This omnipotence is almost certainly not of a pathological instinct. So, in this sense, I entirely agree with Kaës and Enriquez who have shown that omnipotence is a normal drive which supports the desire to teach and care for others. But I think that information

and communication technologies increase this drive because, with the help of these technologies, control can be extended to distant situations.

We are able to see omnipotent trainers through the practices of their trainees. Trainees often write or read the forum because they do not know whether or not this online discussion is evaluated They only know that trainers can read topics and answers in the forum and, in particular, trainers can see who is online, who is writing, who is reading, and when. The tracking of online activities shows the strategies trainees deploy. For example, some trainees, who do not usually engage with the online activities, read all the messages towards the end. This might indicate that these trainees have a tentative approach to this, , particularly in relation to the real or imagined potential for observation of the trainees.

In another e-discussion group, on the last day, a young woman sent a message to her trainer on email. She said that she could not post a message on the platform but that that was strange because, in her job, she uses ICT and teaches others how to use it. She probably wanted to show her trainer that she really had participated. It could be argued that this last minute reading and writing shows trainees fear of omnipotent control. They imagine that the trainers keep an eye on them, as if Big Brother is watching them. The myths about technology (Breton, 1995) are mixed with the anxiety of trainees. The trainers' actual absence encourages the trainees' feelings about this, because the trainees might well feel alone with an imaginary trainer who maintained an omnipotent position.

I must emphasize that that young teachers unconsciously consider their trainers omnipotent. Clearly, I am not saying that trainers are literally omnipotent. However, using a psychoanalytical perspective, we might say that unconscious aims tend to create or modify reality. On one hand, the trainer's omnipotence is a normal component in teaching. On the other hand, the trainer's omnipotence also derives from trainees' feelings and, arguably, and interestingly, the technologies facilitate this omnipotence. From an omnipotent position, others are not considered as autonomous subjects but as malleable objects. However, in the normal teacher training process, this position of omnipotence is not the only one to be considered.

"Good enough" trainers

From this second perspective, trainers can provide a "good enough mother" (Winnicott, 1971) who can contain and create a transitional space where trainees can play and develop the capacity to be alone. To develop this further, and reflect on the e-discussion groups, it is important o let the trainees play with open topics., Crucially, no messages can supply a good or a bad answer, because, importantly, the aim of the debate is to confront ideas, in a playing space, not to demonstrate good or best practices. This is not just a casual observation. Trainees have discussions and, perhaps, accept that others' opinions might be interesting. At the same time, each

trainee cannot clearly identify what s/ he brings to the e-group and what the other trainees give. Hence the discussion group becomes a place for mutual discourse and shared experience. Confirming, Kaës (2007) who suggested this indicates a real thinking process in groups.

The "good enough" trainers are able to accept that trainees question their instructions and play with boundaries. When the task is not clear enough, these "attacks on the frame" are frequently observed (Thouroude, 2007). They are possible because of the trainers' absence. Perhaps these attacks are easier in virtual life than in real life, but they are also possible because the trainers are "good enough" trainers who accept that trainees have the capacity to be alone in their presence. Roussillon (2008), proposes that those who attack the frame probably have the capacity to be alone because they do what the other members of the e-group dream to do. They do not feel destroyed if the trainers are not present and they are sometimes no longer of concern to them. And, at the same time, this "good enough" trainer is not destroyed by this "murder of the father". Unconsciously, the "good enough" trainer converts expelled beta-elements into alpha-elements (Bion, 1962), transforms fragments into links and helps trainees to understand their own thoughts.

Conclusion

According to Blanchard-Laville (2001), the teachers' holding makes a group's psychical envelope. This holding is the result of teacher's discourse, voice and body. I propose that this holding could include the online discussion group, even if there is no voice, nobody in real life, but only a trainer's invisible presence in the forum, through the e-group.

In conclusion, I would not wish to say there are trainers who are in either the omnipotent or good enough positions. Every trainer has unconsciously to deal with normal omnipotence and a "good enough" position. However, I would go on to suggest that there are other areas to examine in relation to information and communication technologies. Trainers not only need to promote a good and secure environment for trainees, but learn to be able to deal with the life-drive and the death-drive which are both accentuated by information and communication technologies. But this will need to be the subject of a later paper.

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Along the continua: mentally ill artist students uninterrupted[1]

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This paper reports on research with a group of art students, each of whom had a history of mental ill health. Longitudinal biographic narrative interviews built an intimate portrait of the different lines of continua these students were negotiating. The extremes of health and illness were narrated, with the painful contrast between 'rapid-fire creative production' (Jaques, 1965: 229) and the despair of hiatus. Prominent was the narrative of striving to locate a developing artistic practice felt variously as therapy, autobiographic catharsis, or pristine content breaking with the stultifying bonds of history, pathology, class. Representing students' reflections over a span of three years, these narratives show us the importance of the seemingly prosaic decisions and daily minutiae of living with mental illness. But they also command a deeper appreciation of how acts of reparation (Klein, 1998) are made as the psyche strives for integration.

Narrative and its approximations

This research prioritised narrative, uninterrupted and free associative ways of working (Hollway and Jefferson 2001), in an interview setting evoking a Winnicottian (1971) potential space. In such a space words, memory, imagination and auto/biography can be held in a potential for becoming other; a potential for increasing us both. But this is also a fraught space; the relationship between researcher and researched inevitably asymmetrical. Fraught too is the arena between us, laden as it may become with difficult psychic traffic; the uncertainty of memory, the risk of fabrication, fear of retaliation. Finally, the narrative space is fraught because in each narrative lies our own, as details resonate with the researcher's life; bringing one's own memories hurtling into consciousness. Such research with its multiple approaches and interpretations finally both suffers from, and is strengthened by 'the theoretical fault lines that traverse it' (Andrews, Squire et al. 2008:3).

Narrative research with mentally ill individuals acquires a more intense momentum and rationale. Firstly, it seems that 'sickness calls forth stories' (Charon, 2004:23); that illness, trauma and mental illness in particular, will seek articulation (Frank, 1995; Stone, 2004). Earlier research I have conducted (Sagan, 2007, 2008) has also tracked the almost visceral need to 'get it down on paper', and showed how narratives gained a direct

importance in the participants' lives. Frank (1995: xii) notes too, that through illness people become storytellers to 'recover the voices that illness and its treatment often take away'. Yet we need also to be cautious of assumptions of knowledge based on stories which give us access to so private an experience of mental illness, or madness. Such narratives are sometimes brought from the depths of despair, fragmentation, or bleakness 'so overwhelming as to be quite beyond expression' (Styron, 2000:83). Stone (2004:49) also warns that 'narrative's tendency toward linearity and resolution' is, perhaps, 'inimical to the expression of madness'.

Narrative is always an approximation and some authors in writing about their illness display a masterful postmodernist allegiance to the twist of identity and of authorial voice. Lauren Slater (2000:223), in her 'Metaphorical Memoir', describes her text as slippery, playful, impish, exasperating' and Derrida (1978:54-5) reminds us that the sentence, by its very essence, carries 'normality within it' and is therefore, almost certainly, the wrong tool for the job of describing that outside the mainstream.

However approximate as a tool, this research set about to use narrative. The exchanges offered a time and a space in which the participants could talk about their life, their illnesses and health, their learning and development, and last but by no means least, their work. That this artistic work existed as a tangible product lent a further corner to a triangle of potential space; between the narrator/artist, the listener/viewer, the artefact. This triangle, evoking an oedipal joining (Britton, 1989) with the artefact/narrative as the creation, the child, evokes the family unit – with all its good, or, in this case more often bad, memories of the power of this unit and its role in our auto/biography.

Continua of artistic practice

The role of continua in the narratives appeared to perform an important function which was intrinsically linked to the experience of mental ill health. Such ill health had ravaged careers; relationships; identities. Arguably, such ruptured narratives had a coherence of their own, but one which was less acknowledged by our linear thinking, as '…it is the implicit or explicit assumption of continuity that underlies the experience of disruption as one of the traumatic aspects of illness.' (Rimmon-Kennan, 2002:12). This pull towards continuity may indeed have made the continua in these narratives a deliberate, if unconscious, attempt at 'wellness' associated with coherence. Lines of continua were embedded across the interview data, and used to represent the journey from illness through to beyond. In these journeys from powerlessness to empowerment, from actual or symbolic 'homelessness' to a being in the world, a picture emerges of fast flowing traffic along multiple lanes. There were hold ups, pile ups, times of cruising, breakdown and gridlock. The overwhelming sense now, after interviewing this most engaging of participant groups, is one of the sheer hard work that

was going on, along these lanes and lines. This paper focuses on just one continuum – that of artistic practice and the attempts made by each student to locate her or himself therein.

For the most part, this group of students did not utilise a discourse of learning commonly used by students in Higher Education. Instead, the learning was *intrinsically* meshed with a developing insight into identity and into their art. The artistic discipline was expressed as being a part of oneself and vice versa, in a way which speculatively, one would not find amongst students of another academic discipline. Artistic practice appeared to hold the other continua, and function as the point at which they could either converge, or, frustratingly, throw into relief the schisms and chasms of self; illness; development. This is not to suggest that the work undertaken was 'therapy' although art production emerged as instrumental in well being. In demanding a rigorous intellectual appraisal of one's creative endeavour, along with an immersion in the affect and embodied experience of art production, artistic engagement was providing a unique process of bringing together internal and external worlds. Indeed, across the data, the particular line of continuum regarding artistic practice was repeatedly described. It began at a point where art activity was acting as therapy:

> *Then the next time I got back into it [art] it was through mental health and occupational therapy and day centres... craft groups and art groups.*
>
> Stella
>
> But the continuum offered a journey away from this:
>
> *I had art therapy. Everything I made was autobiographical. In the same way as talking therapy, to start with you have to stick everything up.*
>
> Ginny

And it developed in very individual ways, as practice went beyond this; in content and in process. Individuals were positioned variously along this continuum, but all were aware, with more or less anxiety, and articulation, of the real possibility of ghettoisation. As Love (2005:161) argues:

'it's one thing to encourage someone to find their 'own voice' and make work about their 'own experience,' but what if such an appeal to this so-called unerring veracity only serves to keep that person in their 'own place;' to fix or reify that voice or experience as essentially and irrevocably marginal and different?'

Particularly because of the stigma and stereotypes surrounding the mentally ill, paradoxically, an identity excavation which was encouraged in other students was felt to be less intrepidly welcomed by this group, who frequently described a hastening to move on from this.

Over time, these narratives displayed the increasing sophistication with which individuals moved along this continuum, and negotiated some of the 'high art' / art therapy/community art schisms. Ginny at one point mused that her work either directly challenged her illness by putting herself in situations which she would normally find very difficult, or it actively explored

her illness by using auto/biographic content. She went on, in the interview reflections, to ask:

> *Is it possible that my theoretical interests sit in-between and bridge these two elements of my practice, and if so, does this in turn mean that these three elements together can combine to form a more cohesive whole self?*

Much later on in the research, she had moved again, significantly, although still grappling with a private/public face and the challenges of conscious over unconscious process. Her objective however remained a cohesive self – where the two ends of the continuum, worked through, and struggled with - merged to provide an experience of integration which went beyond the linear.

The content of the artefacts themselves was reflected upon and woven back into the narratives. But content was frequently less of a focal point than process, what an individual was trying to achieve, and how the methods of working were the creative act, the act of bringing together parts of oneself from different points along the continua. So for Ginny, whose bipolar disorder had earlier encased her in a spatial isolation as well as an isolation from social relatedness, the act of filmmaking, involving crew, participants, team working, location, mobility and communication - became the way in which she addressed these difficult aspects of herself. For Stella, a history of self harm was examined, initially, through 'embroidery with suture thread' – which allowed for an exploration of pain within a context of being held together, sewn up, secured, rather than fraying or falling apart.

There is no doubt that staying with such projects was often difficult – they caused turbulence, and the identities formed shot up and down the continua - integrating, disintegrating and regrouping. But not only did individuals grapple with the task of gauging their position on the continuum of mental stability, or on the continuum of positioning one's self as an artist. Individuals were also facing the task of being an art student within a high-octane atmosphere of an elite arts university, where measurement against a raft of factors was a constant.

Within all this, the capacity to tolerate not knowing was vital. This capacity, to stay in contact with the creative work while not knowing where it might lead or what risks lie ahead, to be able to 'make accidental happenings in the work itself' (Safan-Gerard, 2002) is, perhaps the creative and educative project. Such not knowing was difficult, however, while self-policing was so prevalent. One of the most poignant details of the narratives was the hyper-vigilance of health and ill-health. Such narratives were quite explicit in demonstrating the 'sliding scale of wellness like a barometer, which each individual held in mind, and against which s/he anxiously measured creative production and learning:

> *…So I try and watch myself, for when that phase comes...comes… back…watch myself…*

Eva

This barometer, however, was a deceptive measurer of identity and creativity, revealing the difficult decisions, choices and compromises made. It was clear that sometimes a choice for health, and being able to, as Ginny put it, 'fly beneath the radar' meant negating or even fearing more manic, possibly creative periods.

The splitting off, of one's hypomania, or other outward signs of an illness, seemed also to endorse a negating of an aspect of self, as though the 'less desirable' could be split off from one, and by doing so, protect 'the well' (Murphy, 1987). This attempt at conformity did not always come easily. Lottie, with her history of failure and illness sadly had to hide her effervescence and joy at her achievement of arrival at the university. Because such explosions of emotion and hypomania were for her 'symptomatic' and on a continuum of 'acceptable' to 'non-acceptable' outward signs of mental illness, she felt under pressure to hide behaviour which other students could display without eliciting comment:

> *You know… when you want to start singing and dancing and you can't –I've got to sort of keep a lid on it because some people might not get it.*

This caretaking of social relations led to a particular role and function for the interview setting. Students gradually came to test, then use, its resilience as a factor in enabling what one called her 'creative conversations' – conversations which offered a safe space for critical reflexivity, for which each seemed to thirst.

Continuing psychoanalytically

Psychoanalytic theory attends well to the nature of extremes and drives towards an integration of these. Some of its pointers may help with thinking about the continuum as leitmotif in this data. Keeping things apart, at opposite ends of the continuum, or bringing them together, provides a rich seam for investigation, triggering questions regarding this recurring image in narratives and its function. Continua, first of all, are both time and space constructs. The 'once upon a time' of stories sets up a temporal anticipation of what is to come, of how it will end. But we also envisage a continuum and move through it sometimes physically, spatially; sometimes in a very concrete way as imaging oneself moving through the continuum or sometimes being stuck in a rut, in limbo. Collapsing the time and space aspects of continua is a necessity of the brevity of this paper and it must also be remembered that the ways in which continua as a metaphorical device is used by the people in this research is idiographic.

Freud, (1920:299) remarked that time and space are 'necessary forms of thought' and later, (Freud, 1933) that the Id, chaotic and unbridled was alone a timeless domain. Noel-Smith (2002:390) sees the prerogatives of a

healthy ego as 'temporal and spatial ways of thinking'. Manoeuvrability, between stages, standpoints and mental states, is very different to the psychotic black and white immediacy which brokers no margin for change, self reflection, or tolerance of shades of grey. It is also different from the experience of chaos, where 'time and space, as necessary organising principles of the mind, cannot operate' (Noel - Smith, 2002: 396). My claim is that the symbol of continuum fulfils a function, and that function is to aid healing and repair – the very ability to 'think' a continuum indicating a movement of thought, a move indeed towards more creative thought.

Freud's reality and pleasure principles (1920) and the individual's struggles to move from the realm of instinctual pleasure to an acceptance of reality, itself offers an understanding of much of the difficult work of learning. Education, as Freud claimed, is 'an incitement to the conquest of the pleasure principle, and to its replacement by the reality principle; (Freud, 1911: 224). This move was embedded in narratives which told of, for example, artwork being produced to meet the demands of the reality principle when a looser, perhaps more passionate and risky approach, was yearned for. Lifestyles were spoken of as compromised as individuals bowed to the limitations imposed by an illness which required surveillance. While it is true that the forces of civilisation impose such decrees on us all, the 'high stakes game' meant that such reining in by the ego was particularly active. There was the looming threat of a return to fragmentation, increased medication and hospitalisation, not to mention financial disaster, perceived family or peer shame and a re-entrenchment into cycles of poverty, non-attainment and illness. Such fears and realities were more than enough to police a sober approach to one's work, to some extent sacrificing, ironically, spontaneity and artistic risk.

Klein's theory of splitting (1946) also offers an insight into what the psyche is trying to do through keeping things separate or bringing them together. Her topography of paranoid-schizoid (PS) and depressive positions and our oscillation between the two, also suggests that while in the PS stage, there is an impeded ability to think in spatial or temporal terms. In later work, Grotstein (1978:57) refers to the narcissism of the 'zero dimension' where there is 'no space for manoeuvring of thought'. He describes this psychological state as one in which there is 'no differentiation'; the main victim being thought. It is in the depressive position where one moves towards the capacity for symbol formation and toleration of a sense of integration, bringing together part objects and aspects of one's self previously kept apart. It is these capabilities which suggest a move towards health, and life.

An interest in exploring the impulse to bring things together, or keep them apart, was also explored by Bion who suggested the creative individual is one who has 'negative capability' (Bion, 1970, after Keats, 1970) or, one able to hold paradox without resolving it through a 'flight to split-off intellectual functioning' (Winnicott 1971:xii). The bringing together,

integrating and tolerating the risk to one's schemata, involves difficult, creative work (Ehrenzweig, 1961). Indeed the PS position, uncreative and negating as it is, still performs the key role of keeping out the intolerable and defending against the toil and loneliness of moving to the depressive position and thus beginning the work of mourning, of reparation.

Whilst for the sake of brevity in this paper I have had to collapse the processes of learning with those of artistic production, for these students there was in fact little distinction. Thus the continuum of learning, that of artistic positioning, and that of becoming other to a 'mentally ill person' all involved, initially, the image of leaving behind unwanted parts of oneself. In writing about Janusian thinking, Benau, (2009:85/86) states that it

'occurs at an early phase of the creative process where the person's increased awareness of polarities and their inherent tensions heightens the creator's urgency to resolve his or her unease.'

Indeed, as the interviews in this research progressed, an old self was often tentatively reclaimed as an integral part of one's autobiography. This was a crucial point on the continuum. Benau, also states (p84) that this involves

'the sustained interest toward and ultimately successful processing and integration of previously denied and irreconcilable aspects of self, other, and relationship.'

He maintains that such a creative enterprise begins with 'an unarticulated, personal problem in living'. While each student was involved in narrating the personal problem in living, this problem and its imagined solution seemed to be held along the symbolic continuum. There was, for the most part both time and space in this envisaging, suggesting journeys made away from the crisis points of earlier phases of illness, suggesting too, an integral role for artistic practice as part of this.

It is when this movement in time and space cannot occur that 'toxic stories' (Roberts, 2000:435) hold individuals hostage (Sagan, 2011, forthcoming). This chronicity, observed by Kleinman, arises 'in part by telling dead or static stories, situating the individual in a wasteland,' (Kleinman, 1988: 438). The stories in this research displayed little of this chronicity. It may be that such stagnant stages had been worked through before arriving at university and the arts. Indisputably, art practice itself, and the possibility imagined in its encounter offers healing in some fundamental, unconscious way.

In these narratives, the symbol of continuum, unsurprising as it is in life narratives, was particularly pronounced. One simple reason for this might be that the beginnings of illness 'stamped' a before and hopeful after onto a life narrative, and this was seized by minds determined to repair. Within this, the metaphor of continuum offers a 'road-map' of hope which is more tightly clung to by these students than by those of us less blown by the winds of mental unrest.

The student artists in this research gave generously of their lives in their

narratives and art works, and dispel any residual prejudice of 'deficit' still heard, that mentally ill students represent a risk we cannot afford. I hope to have offered a glimpse in this paper, of the hard work and elegance of their developing a beyondness through their reflections, learning and artistic engagement.

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When the Teachers' Transferential Response Inhibits Learning

Alper Sahin

Introduction

The relationship between pedagogy and psychoanalysis has an old history. Some well-known psychoanalysts and psychoanalytic theoreticians were teachers at the very beginning of their careers (Cifali and Moll, 2003). In 1908 Ferenczi wrote an article "Psychoanalysis and Pedagogy" for the Congress of Salzburg (Ferenczi, 2006) where he pointed out that the current 'conservative' approach to education was detrimental to young people and that it could be better organized on psychoanalytical principles. Furthermore, Anna Freud sought to use psychoanalytic theory in her teaching, as evidenced in the "Matchbox School" project which she undertook with her collaborators, Erickson and Aichhorn (Midgley, 2008). After the project was over she continued to work on psychoanalysis and pedagogy. Her famous conferences to parents and teachers stressed how the psychoanalysis of adults could help with the development of a healthy personality in children (Freud, 2003). Both Ferenczi and Anna Freud were concerned about the unrealistic expectations held by teachers about children, particularly in the area of the emotions. While their work taught that the application of psychoanalytic theory to pedagogy is no simple matter, it is of note that educators who are informed by psychoanalytical theory believe that it is an important perspective by which to understand human beings. Thus, it can be argued that there is still room for further work and research in this area, particularly in the investigation of patterns of interaction between students and teachers. This paper will focus specifically on research on counter-transference within the student-teacher relationship. In this sense it is crucial to differentiate a classroom from a therapeutic setting where the neutrality of the psychoanalyst is a rule.

Does Counter-transference exist in a school setting?

According to Laplanche and Pontalis (2004), 'transference' in psychoanalytic theory means the repetition of unconscious infantile patterns of interaction. In which case, every relationship will have a transferential aspect (Etchegoyen, 1999). Additionally, in the clinical setting, the concept of counter-transference is used to gain deeper insight into behaviour and

relationships. There are many views on counter-transference: Freud (2001) saw it as the analyst's unconscious response to the analysand's transference. This was a problem in that the analyst is not in control of their own unconscious, and this could derail the psychoanalytical process. Therefore, further analysis for the analyst was recommended to allow them to consider the origin of their emotional responses.

Later, theoreticians such as (Küey, 2008) developed and transformed the concept. Tükel (2003), in a review of the evolution in understanding the counter-transference, noted how the concept had developed into an important tool for the analyst to use in making sense of the analysand's material. Laplanche and Pontalis (2004) defined counter-transference as a set of unconscious reactions by the analyst in response to the transferences of the patient. In this case, it can be a useful clinical process. In a neutral analytical setting, the patient's infantile patterns of interaction are reactivated; they interact with the therapist's unconscious and became available for interpretation. In other words, counter transference occurs when the emotions projected by the patient into the therapist stimulate the unconscious of the therapist and evoke a set of feelings and reactions in them. When the therapist looks at their own thoughts, feelings and reactions, this can provide insight into the patient's unconscious. In summary, analysts, through counter-transference, can have a better understanding of the patient's unconscious with the help of their own. Laplanche and Pontalis (2004) are clear that the use of counter-transference should be confined to the psychotherapeutic setting, in which clear rules and boundaries apply, for example in terms of time, the neutrality of the analyst, the free association of the patient and payment. Etchegoyen (1999) too locates counter-transference firmly within the psychoanalytic setting, bounded by the same rules. He also maintains that counter-transference is a process which alerts psychoanalysts to their patients' transferences. Laplanche-Pontalis and Etchegoyen agree that outside the clinical setting, counter-transference is lost within everyday communication.

Britzman (2009), a psychoanalyst and educationalist, however, holds a different view, and has sought to use notions of transference and counter-transference in wider settings, namely the classroom. She maintains that an understanding of the transference, counter-transference relationship between the student and teacher facilitates a better emotional atmosphere, which helps to create a better learning environment. She argues that the teacher's unconscious feelings, phantasies and anxieties form a hidden dimension of what is happening in the classroom. Youell (2006) takes a similar view, pointing out that once the teacher is aware of the dimension of a dynamic unconscious, including the counter-transference, they will be able to adjust their attitudes towards their students. The teacher's view of the student's behaviour will be less dependent simply on the transferential relationship and involve a consideration of their own feelings and responses.

This view of counter-transference having a legitimate place outside the

clinical setting needs to be evaluated and developed. While it may be easy to accept the notion that the teacher's reaction to the student's transferences may be better understood by deploying the concept of counter-transference, and indeed may help with the creation of a more effective teaching and learning environment, it is problematic. Bearing in mind the advice of Laplanche and Pontalis, and Etchegoyen, is it legitimate to call this process counter-transference? The psychoanalytic setting requires, among the previously mentioned boundaries, the anonymity of the psychoanalyst, which means that the patient does not know much about the psychoanalyst's personality. It is very different in teaching: students remain with their teachers all year, in many different activities. Teachers have different roles, including dealing with problems between students, carrying out disciplinary procedures, as well as having fun with them. This is not equivalent to the counter-transference in a clinical setting. Thus, the counter-transference may not the best term to use in a wider, less clearly delineated context. So there is therefore a question about what term can be used. Thus a new name is suggested for conceptualizing the attitudes of the teachers towards students, which is a *transferential response*. The *transferential response* is a concept used specifically for teaching and learning situations where there are intense emotional interactions on the part of teachers as well as the students. The use of this term enables psychoanalytical ideas to be used in education, but without the more precise clinical connotations.

Mourning

In his work *Mourning and Melancholia* Freud (1984) states that during mourning the world ceases to be interesting to the mourner as the person is aware of what has been lost and how the world has become poorer. The process of mourning is not easy and requires time and effort, with different cultures having their own mourning rituals that provide support for the mourners. These allow people not only to express their feelings, but they also set limits to the mourning and assign new functions to the survivors (Bowlby, 1980). However, the mourning that a child experiences for a lost parent varies considerably compared to that of the adult. The surviving parent's attitude seems to be an important variable for the attitude of the child who may react strongly or withdraw, depending on the situation. Through the mourning process, the investment in the deceased person is gradually withdrawn. For a parent who has lost a child the process is slightly different. Bowlby (1980) suggests that the parents of fatally ill children begin mourning when they hear the diagnosis. They have already experienced a loss, that of a healthy child. In the same way that a small child expects the deceased parent to return, so too the parents of a sick child expect that their child may regain health one day. The associated anger and denial disturbs the mourning process and causes complications

since reality is not accepted as it is. Additionally, unless it is not expressed in psychologically safe environments, such as psychotherapy or psychoanalysis, the anger towards the chronically ill or dead person may cause deeper problems such as chronic depression or manic defences against depression. The people who accompany the mourner have a difficult position since all the anger and disappointment which is for the lost or ill person may be reflected onto them. In that case the person who is offering support may feel angry and disappointed at the response to their good intentions.

Mourning and learning

This research is set within two institutions where there is a deep mourning due to the students who have lost their parents or parents who have lost the health of their children. This study focussed on the interaction between the teachers and the researcher and the teachers' relationship to learning. The researcher is also involved with the teachers as part of a teacher training program. Their attitudes towards learning have been studied using psychoanalytic techniques such as interpretations of dreams and the transferences and counter-transference.

Hunt (1989) suggests that in such an environment, psychoanalytically trained specialists will be able to be aware of emotional relations and associated counter-transference. They can offer a deeper understanding of the unconscious aspects of the mental life of the institution. Helpfully, Roquefort (1995) uses this unconscious functioning to differentiate between three types of institution: the psychotic, the perverse and the neurotic. In psychotically functioning institutions, words have no meaning, law does not exist, therefore the members are unable to express themselves and establish relations. Perverse functioning institutions have the law, but it is not obeyed. The validity of the rules does not last long and is useless after a couple of months. The neurotic functioning institution is characterized by feelings of a lack of power and depressive aspects. When a psychoanalytically trained expert works with these kinds of institutions they will need to understand their counter-transferences in order to make an effective diagnosis. The presence and skills of the expert may stimulate and facilitate the verbalization of elaborate thoughts and better understanding within the setting.

Inability of learning

All three ways of functioning have a major impact on the learning environment. Britzman (2003) addresses another angle: the teacher's defences against learning; learning can be experienced as a destructive process that demolishes previous knowledge. But thinking is the expression

of 'not knowing' and so prepares the way for learning. These two concepts are crucial since they suggest that "not learning" is the result of "knowing and not thinking". In the case of teaching, the teacher's rejection or neglect of psychic communication with the student may result in a cold mechanical form of education. The teacher will be using limited knowledge about the student and there will be no space or opportunity to think about them. When the teacher is open to 'not knowing' they are able to think about the emotional communication from the student and respond accordingly. However, this can be problematic as the teachers do not know how to cope with the double burden of their own feelings of helplessness engendered by the institution, and the feelings caused by students. They may respond by being cold and distant and sometimes by being inappropriately friendly with the students. It is suggested that such reactions may be termed *'transferential responses'* since they are shaped by intense interactions with the students. The inability to think about the unconscious aspects of the teaching and learning relationship impedes effective learning, which requires attention to both cognitive and emotional knowledge. When the thinking process is blocked by emotional tension, the teacher's learning ability is reduced. However, a psychoanalytically oriented trainer, with an understanding of counter-transference, and also able to make effective interpretations, may be able to help. This dimension is illustrated in the following cases.

Two Cases in point

Two cases will be discussed in this part of the study in order to explain the impact of unconscious processes on the learning problems of teachers.

The first setting is a boarding school for orphans. The researcher was invited to provide training for the teachers after a bullying event among the students. The intention was to provide teachers with the necessary skills to deal with this problematic situation or prevent further occurrences. The training program used a technique to encourage teachers to identify and work with their feelings. It took the form of a group interaction where teachers were discussing their problems and feelings about the students. The day before the researcher (who was also the trainer, as noted) started to work with the teachers, he had a dream: *I was in a classroom rather like a living room with lots of sunshine. Teachers were spread out chatting about a problem and met me with joy. They were thinking that I would put things in order.* One interpretation of this is that he had identified himself with the grandiosity of the institution and feeling that he will solve all the problems and put the things in order. This possible interpretation is supported by another event.

The teachers had forgotten their appointment for the third meeting but came to meet him on hearing of his arrival. When he asked about the significance of their forgetting, the teacher-leader took the responsibility for

not informing his colleagues, but the researcher insisted that is was important to think more deeply about the meaning of the forgetfulness. One of the teachers said there was a flood in the city, so they forgot about the session (there had in fact been a large disruptive flood in Istanbul). The researcher also asked what the flood meant to them. They all started to talk about the big flood and how the school administration decided to keep the students in school over weekends and holidays due to the problem. They talked of how they were stuck with the students in the school for four weeks, without a break and how they were overwhelmed with day and night duties. They complained about the administration not giving them enough support. The researcher then observed, interpretively, that they were also flooded with feelings of helplessness. The interpretation caused them to stop and think. They were feeling the same way as students, helpless and neglected. That is why they were making the researcher also feel neglected, by forgetting the session. In this way they were avoiding thinking and thus learning from experience. By starting to think about their forgetfulness they were able to understand the difficult behaviours of the students and learn from the situation.

The second case is based in a school for mentally and physically handicapped children. The researcher worked with this school on a voluntary basis. During the first year he met with the volunteers, monthly, to work with their concerns, feelings and thoughts. It appeared that the teachers were disappointed and angry with the parents, who they experienced as excessively demanding. They expected their chronically ill children to be cured, which, despite the teachers' best efforts, was impossible. Parents were, in effect, denying the sad reality that their children would never get better: denying, in other words, the mourning necessary for an unhealthy child. There came a point where the teachers declined to take part in any more sessions with the researcher, claiming that these raised too many dangerous feelings for them. The researcher sought to understand the meaning of the sense of danger for them. The teachers explained that they did not want to express their feelings, and some remained silent and distant. After that meeting the researcher, in turn, felt very angry towards the teachers, particularly because he was working for them on a voluntary basis. They were refusing the help he offered. He recognised, however, that these hateful feelings were out of proportion to the situation. After thinking about this, he came to realize that he was feeling the hatred the teachers felt towards their students, not least because he was willing to accept it. The stuck *'transferential responses'* of the teachers were projected onto the researcher. They made the researcher feel useless, as incapable as they had felt with the blaming parents.

The feelings of the teachers were influenced by transferential responses, related to the mourning of parents and students. They were also accompanied by feelings of anger and hatred, which was the most difficult to express since it creates guilt. That is why mourning is a very difficult

process. The feelings of frustration, anger and guilt towards parents were part of daily life and, because they were so hard to face, inhibited the possibility of them learning from their own experiences. Their *transferential response*, in this case, the unspoken hatred towards the students and parents, had to be worked through in order for them to learn.

Learning, containing

These two examples may be diagnosed as emanating from within neurotic institutions where teachers are feeling helpless and neglected as Roquefort (1995) suggested. This is why they were, at least in part, unable to think and learn. These cases can also be understood using Bion's model of alphabetization (Bion, 2005). The teachers needed to understand, and make understandable, what they get from students, in ways that are analogous to the work of the good enough mother in relation to her baby. But this process is not simple: first of all the teacher must work on their transferential responses, especially in the case of mourning where making it understandable for the child will not be easy. The ability to think about thoughts and feelings creates an area of containment for the other but this requires an ability to contain one's own thoughts and feelings. In these cases the inability to contain was caused by hate which was hidden behind other feelings. Thinking about thoughts and feelings was blocked and learning frozen.

The problem here, then, is how to understand feelings such as hatred in terms of the *transferential response* rather than any counter-transference relationship. When Winnicott (2003) writes about the counter-transference, he takes hatred into consideration. He claims that a real relationship cannot exist unless it includes hate and love, simultaneously. However, people usually consider hatred as a dangerous feeling, capable of ruining everything; therefore it needs to be disavowed. However, as Winnicott points out, when hatred is denied, it gets enacted in a variety of ways. As in the case of these schools, where the teachers cannot even accept the existence of hateful feelings and resist acknowledging them. In this case, unexpressed hatred is enacted in teachers' attitudes towards students: as sadism or masochism, for instance, in which the teacher refuses any help and or rejects the opportunity to learn. It is important to note that feeling such emotions, in their totality, requires the ability to mourn. The teacher mourns for not being a great teacher, a saviour, or resilient to everything and then thinks about why they have chosen this profession. So, the process of thinking the unthinkable can help teachers gain some ability to learn from experience, by minimising their defences, but also to build a more realistic understanding of the nature and messiness of their work.

It should be noted that, in both the above cases, the teachers were able to move towards the ability to think, feel and learn. Nevertheless, they needed support from an expert and time for the process. The goal of the research

was to facilitate a discussion on the potential relationship between psychoanalysis and schools and to build a language of psychoanalysis in the service of teachers as Britzman (2009) has suggested. In this sense, as above , a new term *transferential response* is suggested, as an alternative to the counter-transference, which carries specific connotations from psychoanalytic practice. In contrast the term *transferential response,* derived from psychoanalytic theory, seeks to delineate unconscious emotional responses of teachers towards their students in a classroom and wider institutional setting. In order to illustrate the utility of the term, two cases on the processes at work in two institutions have been studied. It has been found that the teachers' daily interactions with the students have strong effects on their emotional lives. Thus what we can meaningfully call the *transferential responses* of teachers, interrupts their learning and capacity for thinking, unless, that is, there is an intervention from a psychoanalytically oriented expert in a sensitive way.

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Learning through ourselves: the supervision group as a training tool

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Introduction

This paper aims to explore the importance of psychodynamic group supervision as a training tool in the psychology and psychotherapy professions, given how these are each characterized by relational dimensions. The contact between a client, who asks for a counselling, and a psychotherapist, who provides it, initiates transference and counter-transference dynamics. Supervision represents a space for thought, understanding and growth in which the therapist can explore, through their own subjectivity, the client's experiences. Thinking and observing our movements in the analytic space means looking at ourselves (and not only at our client) through a mirror that reflects the image of our own subjectivity.

We believe that a constant observation of our own inner space can facilitate professional growth, as it is quite impossible to enter a relational dimension with complete neutrality. We also acknowledge the emotional frame of a learning process (Salzberger-Wittenberg et al., 1987). Unless recognised and acknowledged every psychologist expresses, not always consciously, her/his own more hidden, threatening, unconscious feelings that can be activated in the therapeutic space and therefore risk contaminating it. Being people who work in such intense relationships requires us to face our own emotions that are transferred in therapeutic work alongside all the defence mechanisms employed to neutralize the threatening, unconscious feelings emerging in the relationship space (Nunziante Cesàro, 2003). Conversely, working on a psychologist's subjectivity (considered both as the object and subject of knowledge) allows for the richness of their counter-transference to be drawn upon, by means of recording what is observed and reported through their observations.

Subjectivity as a means of knowledge

According to Balint (1948), the human mind could be considered the best recording instrument, unless strong emotions impede its functioning. Supervision becomes a means of understanding, a way to get in touch with ourselves and with the others. In our model we use a written report to

translate a lived experience into words; to see more clearly the impalpable and confused sensory mnestic traces that help to build up an understanding of what happens in the clinical work (Boursier, 2007). Nevertheless, a report is already a kind of translation compared with the richness and complexity of the lived experience. It represents our thought processes but is contained by the limits of our own language. In a sense, language has some "representative limits" (Ciccone, 1998) and it cannot fully explain the breadth of emotional experience. However, a report represents a way to communicate and share the therapeutic dimension that can be experienced (Scaglia, 1976) with ambivalence, as a repository for personal phantasies that are not completely accessible to the group.

In this way, group supervision promotes in its participants learning by doing. This process encompasses the experience of self and the situation we are part of (Bion, 1962): this includes emotional meanings, behaviours and relational difficulties that may emerge in the clinical setting as well as in supervision. Supervision allows us to see ourselves and the others through the words and images evoked in the report, to get in touch with emotions and experiences that belong to us and/or to the interaction with our client. Importantly this is achieved by exploring meanings together with the supervision group members.

The written report represents both a tool for sharing and a knowledge instrument for the psychologist, facilitating counter-transference dynamics. In this context a supervision group plays a critical role, despite the persecutory feelings that it may cause. Thinking and reflecting together helps understanding by using others to magnify the individual's experiences and thereby identify submerged thoughts.

Observing the other, observing ourselves

Psychology uses subjectivity as a means of knowledge. Borgogno (1978) thought that,

> "psychological observation cannot be based only on watching or understanding, it should also focus on the being and feeling; this means that we cannot watch only outside the Self, but we have to consider what's inside. We can observe a person only if at the same time we observe ourselves".

This idea can also be applied to the psychologist's position in the double role of being part of a therapeutic relationship and of being subject/object of a supervision process. In a sense, it is necessary to integrate different levels of reality, their life, their experiences, their cultural system, and those values that characterize their way of being and of getting in touch with the others. These elements also represent the lens through which the psychologist experiences and elaborates the therapeutic dynamic, as well as their belonging to the supervision group. If the psychologist makes their position clear: what do they observe? But above all, which parts take place

in the relationship with the others? The supervision phase allows the elements that trouble and defile their being-with-the-other to be integrated, starting a decoding process of what belongs to his/her subjectivity and what belongs to the client's experience or to their own relationship.

The observations shared within the supervision group, together with the chance to compare with other psychologists, seem to play a key role in defining a holding mode. This is a useful frame to understand the other through the self and, in a certain way, the self through the other, keeping firmly the boundaries without being rigid. Scaglia (1976) defines the frame as "non-process based on those constants among which the process takes place". The setting is made up of those unchanging elements that allow the meeting to act as a holding environment for both for the client, that will be reassured, and for psychotherapist. Rather, we think that it is maintenance of the setting that allows them to use the potential of knowing and understanding their relationship with another person, both for his/her self-awareness as well as for a client's therapeutic process.

Field experiences

Our attention has focused on two experiences of group supervision carried out within our research team: the role of group supervision in a project called "Nidi di Mamme" (Mothers' Nests) and the supervision group for psychologists and psychotherapists involved in the psycho-diagnostic procedure for GID (Gender Identity Disorder).

The "Mothers' Nests" project represents an initiative devoted to support and prevent psycho-social risk in childhood; at the same time it pursues a social inclusion goal for women coming from difficult emotional, social, economic and cultural contexts. The project derives from the cooperation among different public services historically involved in a high risk area of the city of Naples, known as the "Spanish Quarters": this is a place characterized by illegality, urban decay and social exclusion. The project oversees day nurseries for children between 0 to 3 years, where women - hired from the 'quarters' - can become nursery assistants under the guidance of educators. The project model (Nunziante Cesàro, 2005; Nunziante Cesàro, Boursier, 2007) makes use of a specific application of psychoanalytic methodologies, such as direct observation and group supervision. These observations are used for the early identification of psychopathological risk in children and as a way of supporting development and integration processes within the nursery team.

Supervision of the psychologists is based on reading and discussion of observation reports, and the process also applies to the educators. It allows light to be shed on the psychodynamic relationships between the adults and children and fosters what we can call, a process of learning by doing. The

priority for clinical psychopathologists who operate in this social network is to provide an opportunity for healthy growth by preventing developmental risks and possible psychopathological outcomes.

The project ensures that every day nursery (with about 18 children) is supported by a team including two educators and one psychologist. The educators are psycho-pedagogically trained to work both with children and with the women helpers to pursue positive outcomes for the children. The psychologists are psychoanalytically trained to provide the perspective from which the group of children is observed, and the techniques through which the prevention programme is achieved. They join the day nursery once a week. During their time there they observe the class, meet the children's parents and the team. Both the psychologists and educators are supported by a supervisor who is well experienced in pedagogical and psychological areas.

We are aware that observers, working with their subjectivity, will draw from the richness of their counter-transference while recording and reporting what they observe; and that this enables signs of healthy development, or of unease, to be identified from the children's behaviour. Therefore, 'through the looking that holds and seeks a meaning' (Nunziante et al. 2007), the observation of children's behaviours and interactions (sometimes with their parents, but more often with educators, auxiliaries and with other children) enables the tracing of developmental profiles and the identification of possible psychopathological risks (Winnicott, 1958; Winnicott, 1965; Mahler, 1975). Moreover, within the team, the observer/psychologist's observation function is translated into a thought and word function (Boursier, 2005) that facilitates reflections and supports the educators' activities. The application of direct infant observation and its use in an intervention research project provides a learning environment for the professionals involved. The dynamic derives from the fundamental importance of holding as a principle of psychological supervision. This working methodology is innovative as it is based on the sharing and discussion of the observers' reports with the educators, which promotes their learning by doing from the direct experiences of emotional meanings, of behaviours and of relational problems in the day nurseries. At the deepest level, it facilitates the observing of self in the words and images of the report and therefore creating a possibility of being in touch with emotions that belong to the self or to the interaction with the other. It is then possible to handle and elaborate meanings by comparing with oneself and with others, within the supervision group.

Finally, the elaboration and examination of significance within these reports helps the educators to benefit from a mutually enriching activity based on exchange and cooperation. The model used creates a shared frame of reference and it initiates a learning process where everyone, in accordance with their skills, can become more self-aware and understand their resistance to change (Nunziante Cesàro, 2005).

Supervision can be a powerful means of learning not only for the 'Mothers' Nests' teams but also for workers involved in the psycho-diagnostic process of Gender Identity Disorder (GID). This group plans a weekly meeting with the workers that follow transsexual people in what may be called their psychopathological journeys (in Italy this is the first step of a psycho-surgical-legal procedure to realize the transition between the sexes). A GID diagnosis process does not seem easily achieved. It is a very painful journey for those who seek to reconcile their body and gender identities. Those who arrive at this frontier have often crossed a land of troubled reflection, of doubts, of fear. They are afraid of continuing to live in their original position (their biological sex); this creates an unsatisfactory and unthinkable link with their own body and a distorted relationship with the world. They are afraid to cross the frontier, and to embrace the unknown condition of the "post-operation" stage with hope and positive expectations. Sometimes we met people who have arrived at the surgical operation without any kind of awareness about their path, as if they have conceived the physical loss of genitalia as a miracle that would have solved their suffering life. It is hard to get in touch with the "post" fears, imagining the effort to meet a new body, to think impossible dreams (e.g. motherhood and fatherhood), considering too the probable loss of genital pleasure. However, if everything is unbearable and the present and the past are so painful, then the idea of a future life, even if unknown, can seem less difficult.

We have to consider the negotiation of such worlds through a therapeutic frame. At the same time, it is necessary to carry out a precise analysis of the client's demands while being aware that there is no way back. Once you have passed the frontier, the visa is cancelled. People become citizens of a new world, without the possibility of a migratory return. In this case it is vital to consider the psychologist's emotional background (Nunziante Cesàro, 1995). For example, which parts of the psychotherapist does a transsexual client touch with their inexorable desire to change sex? Which categories do they belong to? Does the client's belief, concerning castration, cutting and renouncing of a body (usually close to ours), frighten us, and how? How does the worker manage their desire to stop the client in relation to the acting out represented by the surgical operation? The supervision group aims to support the psychotherapists' elaboration processes, starting from the rich experiences derived from growing awareness of their counter-transference.

We consider Valerio's (2000) ideas to be important in terms of the counter-transference with transsexual people; he said that this kind of relationship seems to be focused on the "look": on one hand, the "transsexual's compulsive need to capture the psychotherapist's looking", a look that allows them to substantiate their own life; on the other hand, the psychotherapist could be irritated by a look that robs (expropriating her/him of her/his gender qualities) or decorates them (invading the worker with a gender image complying with the transsexual's way of being). Therefore, it is

fundamental for a trainee-psychotherapist to have a place for 'thinking about' such matters, as in the supervision group. This is a place where the dynamics belonging to the relational area can be re-actualized through the written report; a place where the elaboration process focuses moves from the client towards the psychotherapist; a chance to see oneself looking at the other. Supervision therefore seems to be a most important tool for a psychotherapist, whatever their intervention field. It provides not only the principles for a lifelong learning, but also, as part of this, for the psychotherapist to be in touch with him/herself: a necessary condition for the effectiveness of any therapeutic process (Rogers, 1951).

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Training teachers: psychoanalytical issues in the teacher-student and institutional relationship

Anna Zurolo and Alessandra Delli Veneri

Introduction[1]

This paper is concerned with training teachers working in difficult situations in Southern Italy. It describes a number of the interventions undertaken, and reflections on those experiences. Generally speaking, it is always difficult to promote interventions in very structured organisations; in such contexts it is important to keep in mind that even when an intervention is directly requested, many resistances to any change can be expressed. Moving from this general consideration, we believe that any intervention should be respectful of the particular characteristics of each organisation, of its history and of relationships between individuals. Any intervention by an external professional can be perceived as by an 'external stranger', whose knowledge and 'know how' are, on the one hand, important instruments to use, and on the other, elements that threaten the pre-existing equilibrium. Based on a range of theoretical, largely psychoanalytical perspectives, such as the work of Bion (1961), Kaës et al. (1979) and Winnicott (1965), we believe that any training is a transformative process which alters the practice of those who take part (Urwand, 2002).

In line with these views, we want to highlight that any training process needs a willingness to learn and to change in response to that process. However, such motivation cannot be taken for granted and needs to be developed as part of the training process, particularly with those working in the field of education. Furthermore, we see the training process as a constant work in progress, rather than leading to a finite mastery. The teaching of knowledge and skills are two aspects of the training, but, we argue, the training is a relational process which challenges trainees and trainers to encounter deeper and more personal feelings. We therefore use the term *formative relationship* (Blandino & Granieri, 1995) to describe an interaction between two people to recognise the part played by the individuals' inner worlds and particular emotional experiences. In this paper we will explore this approach illustrating a psychological intervention located within the frame of Operative National Programs (PON) conceived by the Italian government, with financial support from the European Commission (F.S.E. 2007-2013).

Context for the intervention

Before we consider the intervention itself, it is important to introduce more of the context in which it takes place. The Italian system of schooling has recently been re-formed into a tri-partite model, comprising: school, job training and apprenticeship. A student can choose to attend either a high school, focusing on art, humanities, sciences, or a professional one. In professional schools, preparation for employment in a range of careers is the main aim; these schools provide a certificate which enables the student to find a job at the end of the third year: when s/he is about 15 years old. Alternatively, a student can choose to complete the other school route to obtain the diploma required to undertake university courses, or to find a more specialized job, when s/he is about 18 years old. There is much concern about what students actually achieve and the extent to which they engage with, and complete, their courses. In this paper we use the term 'school dispersion' to cover a range of issues surrounding the achievement and success of students. These include irregularities in attendance, being late for lessons, failing work and interrupting courses.

Our intervention took place in Southern Italy where schools in certain areas are characterised by difficult work environments, a preponderance of teachers on temporary contracts and a high rate of student 'dispersion' and drop-out. The reasons for the high rate of student dispersion and drop-out are complex, the problem not being confined to areas of economic or social problems, but also affecting areas of high productivity. Arguably there are two key factors: the cultural acceptability of an early start to working life; and the availability of jobs not requiring any degree of specialization. Data from the Italian Education Ministry indicate that the drop-out rate is high in the first year of secondary school, when the student is about 12/13 years old, and is particularly marked in professional schools. The Italian government, using the framework of the Operative National Programme (PON), with financial support from the European Commission, has sought to address these issues in a number of ways, including through school development programmes, in accordance with the European Union's priority for developing a knowledge-based economy. Specifically, PONs have a range of specific goals which include: the reduction of school dispersion; improved gender equality awareness; teacher training; and more integrated links with the world of work. To this end, schools have been allocated resources to develop their own PON.

It is usual for psychologists to be called upon to help with the delivery of such a school development programme, to offer alternative training approaches and to focus on the particular needs of that institution. It is a fundamental tenet of this work that the psychologist keeps in mind the relationship between the individual teacher and the context in which he/she works, an element defined in the "analysis of a request" (Carli & Paniccia, 2003). When responding to a request made by an institution or a group, the psychologist should consider that such a request often corresponds to a

break of some pre-existing equilibrium in the work environment. This equilibrium is based on processes of collusion that are centred on how emotions and affections are shared between individuals working in the same context (Carli *et al.*, 2007). When the collusive processes, which are at the basis of relationships, fail, the consequence could be to fracture and disrupt the emotional relationships between the individuals and the context. As a consequence, the psychological intervention aims to enhance relationships between the individual and the context, and to improve approaches and communication.

The intervention described in this paper took place following a request for training made to the University of Naples Frederico II by a school in Southern Italy. The training was to include learning facilitation and the management of student-teacher interactions.

The interventions

The intervention consisted of about 10 meetings, and 25 hours of total activity. The following techniques were used: circle time, psychodrama activities, narration and group discussion.

Circle Time

The request for training with a psychologist with experience of clinical work and group management related to the need to deal with teachers' specific job and work related emotional demands.

During the first meeting, in order to encourage the discussion and to provide the opportunity of comparing experiences with each other, the psychologist, with the help of a co-facilitator skilled in observation of in-group settings, suggested the use of 'circle time'. The implicit purpose of using the circle time technique is first of all to create a space for thinking and sharing aspects related to participants' own job and professional identity. It also creates a mutual dialogue, in a manner different from the more typical formal discussions of technical questions between teachers. Circle time was shown to be a very effective technique for improving emotional communications and to allow them to be recognized in themselves as well as in the others (Colasanti and Mastromarino, 1991, Francescato et al., 2000).

The most frequently recurring themes of the discussion were related to the teachers' professional identity, which was perceived as uncertain and precarious, particularly for teachers managing their role inside a school that was defined a 'frontier school'. These teachers feel their jobs could come to an end at any time and therefore feel discouraged from investing in the emotional side of their educational role. The permanent teachers, for their part, describe the school as a *temporary parking area* for students who are not really interested in learning. It is noticeable that all the communications during circle time are related to the individual participant's circumstances

and the wider school context. The communications are clearly based on the difficulties that the specific school context brings to the teachers.

The most distressing difficulties discussed are generally related to a lack of motivation of the pupils. When the facilitator asks participants to think about what could be done to create a successful learning environment, the teachers respond with a form of hopeless acceptance. They defend their own practice, and focus instead on the students' lack of interest in learning and disinclination to engage with the learning on offer. The discussions reveal deeper concerns, more or less common to all the teachers, concerning the kind of pupils attending a professional school: they are frequently characterised as problematic pupils, coming from socio-economically disadvantaged families, speaking slang and immune to any disciplinary punishments.

The teachers appeared despondent about their jobs. Some of them viewed their job as a mere collection of duties without any place for a thought about themselves, their teaching style, the relationship between the teacher and the student, or between the student and the class. A very restricted perception of the job had emerged, a job perceived as performed in a problematic context and impossible to change. Furthermore, the teachers did not believe they could take action and make a contribution to the educational and emotional development of the pupils, limiting themselves solely to the delivery of blocks of information. The earlier meetings were about the creation of a sense of the complexity of the role of the teacher as well as the emergence and recognition of the problems entailed. After consideration of the problems which emerged during Circle Time, the facilitator and co-facilitator programmed a different set of training activities to give the teachers the opportunity of examining, further, these emotional and communication difficulties.

The psychodrama activities. A typical lesson: who is bothering whom?

The analytical psychodrama technique, often used in a French training context, comprises the dramatization of significant events, followed by a discussion to create what we can term a *group breathing space*. In other words, the group elaborates on the experiences expressed in the psychodrama. Kaës *et al.* (1999) suggest that three steps contribute to the overall process, namely, the choice of the theme, the dramatization itself and the ensuing discussion.

It is interesting to note that there were mixed reactions to the sessions, with some teachers being sceptical of the scenarios selected, while others enjoyed the opportunity for training. In one session, after an initial hesitant discussion about the selection of topics and allocation of roles, it was decided to perform a 'typical' lesson. In this scenario, one member of the group (the only male teacher) takes the role of the teacher, while the rest of the group, comprising female teachers, takes the parts of a mixed gender

class, with more males than females.

The group depicts a highly chaotic scene: the students are disrespectful of any school rules, interrupting the teacher, without respect for the speaking order, throwing papers about and chatting amongst themselves. The students are constantly asking if they can go out and there are continuous comings and goings. One of our team also participated as a female student asking impertinent questions: 'How old are you prof? Are you married?'. The teacher, presented as inexperienced, struggles to manage or discipline the class and awkwardly attempts to apply the teaching rules he had been taught. During this dramatization an actual student – female – bursts into the classroom and asks one of the teachers taking part in the psychodrama to come out. Initially the teacher replies that she cannot do this, but then agrees and leaves. The dramatization subsequently resumes.

The teacher performer carried on without reference to the disturbance, and this seems to reflect what happens in real classroom. When the teacher returns after a few minutes she does not resume her role but stands back awaiting the end of the dramatization.

The narration: building a collective story

During some subsequent meetings the group is asked to use the narration device to create a further moment to pause and reflect on the teacher-pupil relationship. The group is invited to build a collective story, in which each participant can add a narrative fragment to build a global plot. After a brief period of disorientation, the teacher who had seemed the most active during the psychodrama activity began the narration, and a global story slowly unfolded. The first statement of the story was "my job is useless", followed by a tale in which the figure of the helpful teacher takes form; a teacher putting all his efforts into trying to enable his undisciplined pupils to gain an adequate education – ultimately unsuccessfully.

A male pupil is described, screaming and disturbing the regular course of the lessons, arguably trying to get the attention he misses in his family. The pupil has a "good heart" and is not malicious, but he also promotes rage, because of his continuous attempts to get attention; he disturbs and generates chaos inside the class group. For some teachers the job is described as "a nightmare", to which they are unable to react, a nightmare represented by this undisciplined, disordered, pugnacious and violent boy. In other words, he is a figure that collects the teachers' projections of dissatisfaction and the powerlessness inherent a job that itself seems to be at risk. They do not know how to help the disadvantaged pupils, who then become the object of certain feelings: they tolerate the truancies, and wait for the time that the pupils will inevitably drop out. The narration of the pupil's character becomes more complex, expressed by the dichotomy "good-bad". He is different from the class group, his behaviour does not yield to the rules of cohabitation, but at the same time he deserves more attention, more mothering perhaps, to understand and, sometimes, justify

his weaknesses and impetuous behaviours. His behaviour is not conducive to the rules of being with others, but, at the same time, he deserves more caring attention to understand and, sometimes to justify, his disturbing and impetuous behaviour.

Final remarks

These training experiences allowed us to think about the complexity facing the psychologist organising a training programme for an institution, even one specifically requested by a school. In terms of the institution, we note the comments of Montesarchio and Marzella (2002) on the importance of preserving the space-time aspects of the training setting, in particular when the training is taking place within the institution which requested it. In fact the participation of the teachers in the programme was often complicated by room changes, finding time within the school timetable for the programme, and keeping to that time. Often other school meetings, which the teachers were supposed to attend, were organised for the time the teachers were supposed to come to the training. Arguably, this reflects the school's ambivalence towards the training it had requested, the tension between the need for change and the fear of it. On the one hand, the approach we took was problematic because it flew in the face of the teachers' expectations of training being about 'how to do'.

On the other hand, it facilitated a more intimate experience. Teachers had the opportunity to recognise and talk about difficult and potentially debilitating feelings, some of which they might share with their students, in particular about the social and economic context, or the perceived immutability of the school. The psychologist in this situation is seen as someone with the duty to solve the crisis and *impasse* magically, without touching on, or involving, the subjectivity of the teachers themselves. Furthermore, as the external stranger, the psychologist is the repository of a 'messianic hope' (Bion, 1961), collecting the most primitive aspects of circular dependence in the group; we know that Bion identifies the dependence as a function that can characterise some moments of a group life, in a structure where one group waits for one who can solve and realise the group's wishes.

However, the possibility of thinking about the situation made the discomfort of working in a so-called 'frontier post school' much clearer. The teachers could experience a deeper insight into the anxiety and bewilderment which often features in a school abandoned by its students. The school drop-out is perceived as inevitable by the teachers, and is one of the causes of their feelings of disinvestment, powerlessness and resignation. Losing a pupil is often experienced as losing a part of themselves, or losing a child who leaves the comfortable place represented by the home/school, despite the efforts and the care of the parent/teacher. In this sense, the different activities, e.g. the narration technique, the psychodrama sessions and the

subsequent sharing of the emerging themes, succeeded in creating a facilitating environment (Winnicott, 1965), in order to make emotional thought and hypothesis making possible. This is made by bearing in mind that the training route 'aims to a revision, to an expansion, to bring into question the reference systems of a specific organization. This is accomplished by introducing a new value system for the organization and for the single subjects' (Montesarchio and Marzella, 2002, op. cit.). In these terms, the psychodynamically-based training can provide a suspension of the teacher's own role, activating self-thinking mechanisms and the possibility of thinking about a way of working which is free of the usual organisational constraints.

However, we agree with the remarks of Blandino and Granieri (1995), who underline the importance of not just seeing the school as a social organization (Rice, 1965), having a major purpose, but also as a system that can exhibit defensive mechanisms and resist change. In this sense, the school as a social organization can, on one side, aim to change, while conversely, it may also block any moves towards change. This seems even more likely when external conditions prevail which prevent the pursuit of the goals on which the organization is founded. It is, therefore, as important to address issues of anxiety, powerless and resignation in relation to the institution, as it is to encourage the development of interpersonal relationships, if real change is to take place. In conclusion, "It is not possible for any real change, any real professional cooperation, if the members of an organization (in our case the teachers of the school) do not question the way they use their structure, the meaning that their own professional role has for themselves, (and) the fears and expectation they have in respect to any novelty or change request" (Blandino, 1995, p. 93).

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Charles Gardou
Le handicap au risque des cultures

Jean-Sébastien Morvan

Gardou, C. (2011). *Le handicap au risque des cultures*. Toulouse : Erès.

Le dernier ouvrage du professeur Charles Gardou revêt un caractère à la fois unique et exceptionnel.

Il est unique car c'est bien la première fois qu'une vision panoramique du champ du handicap est ainsi proposée et menée à bien. « Ouvrage à plusieurs voix » (vingt contributions de chercheurs issus des cinq continents - Océanie, Amérique, Asie, Afrique, Europe), l'objectif est bien d'en « explorer les représentations collectives », en quelque sorte de dresser une « fresque anthropologique ». Pari magistralement et remarquablement tenu.

Ouvrage exceptionnel car, au-delà des diversités des cultures et des situations abordées, il dégage une trame commune à la confrontation au handicap - très bien mise en relief dans l'introduction et la conclusion proposées par Charles Gardou - et par au moins trois caractéristiques bien marquées qui en constituent le cadre contenant, en impulsent la dynamique sous jacente et expliquent les conduites répondantes d'ajustement. Représentations (lieux de mémoire) et affects (lieux de souffrance) s'y entremêlent dans une recherche anxieuse et ambivalente face au questionnement que provoque le trauma du handicap.

En premier lieu, un effet de rupture : histoire de chocs et choc d'histoires, confrontation sidérante au corps déformé, à l'esprit dérangé, et par là au négatif de l'inconnu, de la perte, du manque, de l'altérité, de la faille - soulevant l'éventualité de la défaillance - du moins mais aussi du trop, alors que l'attendu préfiguré merveilleux fait défaut. Le sentiment d'étrangeté, de désarroi et de déroute qui en découle signe une césure générationnelle et filiatrice et entraîne, à partir de l'irruption du désordre, une recherche éperdue, revendicatrice, de justifications à visée de dédommagement et de réparation, sur fond conflictuel et ambivalent à la fois de non-acceptation-rejet et d'acceptation-accueil.

Un second négatif dès lors se superpose et s'imbrique au premier sous forme de résistances et de défenses (de protection et de dégagement), variées selon les cultures mais fondamentalement proches par ce noyau et pivot central qu'est le face à face avec une image de l'autre et de soi dé-figurée. Ce qui est là en jeu est de l'ordre de l'impensable-irreprésentable et de l'indicible masqué par des mouvements de culpabilité (châtiment et sentiment d'être détruit), de honte (sentiment d'être vu) et d'humiliation (sentiment d'être rabaissé), d'hostilité (colère divine) mais aussi de tentative de dépassement de la dette imaginaire et de sauvegarde de l'autre comme membre de la collectivité, investi alors de pouvoirs tutélaires bénéfiques.

En deuxième lieu, l'entrée dans la recherche de la cause : il s'agit de chercher à comprendre l'incompréhensible. Cette recherche indéfinie - li-

néaire et réductrice - de la cause de la cause, en spirale, mêle explications imaginaires, le plus souvent contradictoires : elles colmatent l'angoisse de base que suscite le double « différent », « fantôme » vécu comme danger et menace par « idées » fantasmées de dégénérescence, de contamination-contagion et de transgression potentielle des interdits fondateurs que représentent les tabous du meurtre et de l'inceste. Cet imaginaire collectif, abondamment présent dans les mythes et les rituels, se nourrit de thématiques faisant appel au religieux, au magique. Comportements conjuratoires, sacrificiels, exorcisants (sollicitation du divin, du devin, du sorcier, du chaman, …) - à la fois expiatoires - se concrétisent au travers de démarches qui recèlent finalement un désir, masqué et brouillé, de trouver du sens là où le non-sens, le contresens, le faux sens avaient pu surgir. Irrationnel et rationnel se chevauchent au travers d'un travail souterrain de fixation et d'évitement dans lequel s'affrontent, dans un entre-deux, « forces maléfiques et forces bienveillantes », recourant aux explications - comme point d'ancrage sécurisant - de l'organogenèse, de la sociogenèse moins souvent à celles de la psychogenèse.

Puis encore, l'adoption d'un mode de fonctionnement - de stratégies -, recherche et témoin d'un compromis de vie le moins souffrant et le plus réassurant possible tant pour soi que pour le groupe familial et pour la collectivité, sauvegarde du lien social à l'encontre de ce que serait le dé-lien. A ce niveau, l'« acceptance » peut trouver place et se faire mise en signification, véritable travail psychique de re-

figuration au travers duquel l'autre est moins pensé, moins parlé, moins agi. Ouverture et perspectives, projets communs et partagés deviennent de l'ordre du possible. Ils sont œuvre d'adaptabilité pour peu que l'onde de choc initiale puisse être dépassée, c'est à dire représentée et symbolisée de par la lente acceptation de la non-acceptation. Cette « métamorphose » n'efface pas « l'insensé » originaire mais le secondarise en termes de reconnaissance ; là où il y avait irruption de la différence se glisse sentiment partagé de mêmeté et de ressemblance en tant qu'appartenance commune au groupe social.

Ces mouvements et ces représentations, les reléguées (celles de l'inconscient individuel, familial, collectif) et les déléguées, - supports et ressorts de cette confrontation - se retrouvent et sont repérables dans les différentes présentations des chercheurs. Ils et elles se corporéisent en singularité selon les cultures - et leurs lectures, chapitre par chapitre, est une véritable découverte ethnographique - mais le fond d'universalité qui les caractérise est constamment présent. Ce dont il s'agit est bien l'interrogation sur les origines et ce qu'il en est du soi aux prises avec les processus d'identification et de devenir de tout être en voie d'humanisation.

On ne peut que recommander vivement la lecture d'une telle somme - « variations anthropologiques » - combien éclairante du fait des analyses en profondeur à la fois fines et nuancées. Elle a le mérite de situer la confrontation au handicap à la fois comme situation, comme relation -

par le biais paradoxal de barrières de contact puisqu'il s'agit à la fois de séparer et de réunir - , et par là comme recherche d'un équilibre harmonieux. Si ce processus est atteint - ce qui n'est pas toujours le cas et n'est jamais définitivement acquis parce que fragile - il permet à chaque protagoniste de trouver place et sens dans sa position de sujet à la fois psychique et social. A défaut, par double lien il s'enlise en « intégration ségrégative » équivalent de relégation ; au mieux, il débouche sur l'« integrum est » : il est devenu libre de…

Personnes handicapées, familles, professionnels des sciences humaines et sociales, décideurs ne se tromperont pas en prenant connaissance de cet ouvrage qui fera date dans la compréhension des tenants et des aboutissants de la confrontation aux situations de handicaps dans les sociétés humaines.

« Le handicap au risque des cultures » pourrait aussi s'intituler « Les cultures au risque du handicap » tant il est vrai que la déstabilisation liée au handicap ébranle de façon complexe et paradoxale les repères individuels et sociétaux par ses effets moins de miroir que de réverbération énigmatique : qu'en est-il du rapport à l'autre et par là du rapport à soi ? C'est bien ce que met en relief cet ouvrage « salutaire » qui arrive à point nommé.

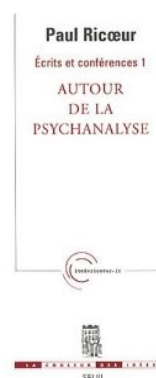# Paul Ricœur
Écrits et conférences 1,

Autour de la psychanalyse.

Marie-Anne Sandrin-Bui
Louis-Marie Bossard

Ricœur, P. (2008). *Écrits et conférences 1, Autour de la psychanalyse*. Paris : Seuil. 331 p.

Nous sommes en présence du premier ouvrage d'une série destinée à la publication d'écrits et de conférences de Paul Ricœur qui, pour une grande part, sont devenus introuvables ou inaccessibles bien que conservés par le Fonds Ricœur dans leur version originale. Nous devons ce volume entièrement consacré à la réflexion du philosophe sur la psychanalyse à Catherine Goldenstein et Jean-Louis Schlegel qui ont regroupé des textes dont l'origine se situe entre 1966 et 1988. À part deux d'entre eux, aucun de ces textes n'a jamais été publié en français sous cette forme : on en trouve un en français dans une version abrégée et sans notes ; les autres ont été publiés en anglais, en italien et en japonais.

Ils nous rapportent la réflexion de Paul Ricœur qui, lecteur de Freud, accepte que la règle et le critère de la raison réflexive soient déplacés. Trois directions de pensée sont repérables, présentes dans des textes qui se complètent et parfois se répètent. La première concerne la question du projet et de la validité de la psychanalyse en tant que science ; la deuxième touche aux rapports de la psychanalyse avec la culture ; la troisième est centrée sur le récit et la narrativité. On retrouve la trace des questions que Paul Ricœur se pose dans son ef-

fort pour comprendre les limites du discours tenu par la psychanalyse et dont il fait état dans son ouvrage de 1965, *De l'interprétation. Essai sur Freud*. Mais ici, il dépasse son questionnement sur ce qu'il peut retenir et importer du message de la psychanalyse dans son propre champ d'investigation, pour entrer dans un véritable débat avec l'œuvre de Freud et en ce sens nous sommes en présence de l'évolution de sa pensée sur plus de vingt ans.

C'est par l'intermédiaire de la question de la preuve qui est « aussi ancienne que la psychanalyse elle-même » que Paul Ricœur aborde le problème de la scientificité de la psychanalyse. S'interrogeant sur ce qui, en psychanalyse, « mérite d'être considéré comme un fait vérifiable », il avance que c'est dans la situation analytique que doivent être recherchés ces faits et, de manière à les sélectionner, il propose qu'ils obéissent à quatre critères : la possibilité d'être dits, celle d'être adressés à autrui, celle d'être fantasmés, figurés et symbolisés, et enfin celle d'être rapportés à l'histoire d'une vie. Il se demande également quelles relations il est possible d'établir entre la théorie et l'expérience analytique en fonction de leurs dimensions de procédé d'investigation et de méthode de traitement. Il pense que la procédure d'investigation a une affinité profonde avec les disciplines textuelles d'interprétation ; il parle de la psyché comme d'un texte à déchiffrer et comme un système de forces à manipuler ; il ajoute que l'analyse elle-même est une sorte de travail ne pouvant pas être assimilé à une simple interprétation.

S'attaquant directement à la question précise de la preuve dans les écrits psychanalytiques de Freud, Paul Ricœur ne veut pas appliquer les critères de vérification valables pour les sciences dans lesquelles « les faits sont empiriquement donnés » à des observateurs extérieurs. Reprenant les critères des faits psychanalytiques, il parle d'un « dire vrai », la psychanalyse aidant le sujet à surmonter les distorsions qui sont « la source de la mécompréhension de soi-même » ; puis il fait le lien avec autrui, la prétention à la vérité se plaçant dans le champ de « la communication intersubjective » ; ce qui l'amène à envisager ce qu'un sujet fait de ses fantasmes et le passage du fantasme au symbolique, de l'aliénant à ce qui fonde l'identité individuelle et collective ; enfin, il rattache la prétention à la vérité à « l'engagement narratif de l'explication psychanalytique », suggérant que la psychanalyse et les sciences historiques ont en commun le concept d'intelligibilité narrative. Ainsi, pour lui, le patient en analyse est « l'acteur et le critique d'une histoire qu'il est de prime abord incapable de raconter » et la prétention à la vérité passe par la reconquête du pouvoir de raconter sa propre histoire.

Se demandant de quelle sorte de vérification ou de falsification les énoncés de la psychanalyse sont capables, Paul Ricœur énonce : « Si la prétention ultime à la vérité réside dans les histoires de cas, le moyen de preuve réside dans l'articulation du réseau entier : théorie, herméneutique, thérapeutique et narration ». À la critique selon laquelle la validation en psychanalyse est condamnée à rester circulaire, il répond en indiquant qu'une

« bonne explication psychanalytique » doit être cohérente avec la théorie psychanalytique, qu'elle doit satisfaire aux « règles d'universalisation établies par les procédures d'investigation visant au décodage du texte de l'inconscient », qu'elle doit pouvoir être incorporée au travail de l'analysant et permettre une amélioration thérapeutique, qu'elle doit enfin « pouvoir élever une histoire particulière de cas à la sorte d'intelligibilité narrative » qu'on attend d'un récit. Il souligne ainsi que ce cercle de la validation n'est pas « vicieux » dans la mesure où ses critères tendent à s'établir de façon cumulative par renforcement mutuel et non comme condition de vérification de l'un pour l'autre.

Rappelant la relation triangulaire caractérisant la psychanalyse, capitale à ses yeux, entre « une procédure d'investigation, une méthode de traitement et une théorie », Paul Ricœur s'interroge sur son rapport avec l'herméneutique afin de répondre à ceux qui soutiennent que la psychanalyse ne satisfait pas aux « critères minimaux d'une science empirique », soulignant alors la parenté entre sa procédure d'investigation et les disciplines d'interprétation textuelle. Relevant que Freud « combine ensemble les métaphores textuelles et les métaphores énergétiques pour produire des métaphores mixtes », il avance que c'est « la conjonction entre la procédure d'investigation et la méthode de traitement qui contraint la théorie à user de cette manière de concepts semi-méthaphoriques ». Il envisage alors ce que l'herméneutique peut attendre de la psychanalyse selon trois propositions : d'abord accepter de renoncer au cogito cartésien

puisqu'on ne se connaît pas mais « qu'on ne cesse de s'interpréter » ; ensuite accepter que cette compréhension indirecte commence obligatoirement par « la mécompréhension » ; enfin admettre que la compréhension de soi doit passer par « un dessaisissement de soi ». Pour Paul Ricœur, c'est donc un ensemble complexe et cumulatif de critères qui constituent l'appareil de la preuve en psychanalyse dans la mesure où l'on ne se comprend soi-même « qu'à travers un réseau de signes, de discours, de textes qui constituent la médiation symbolique de la réflexion ».

Pour traiter ce qui touche aux rapports de la psychanalyse avec la culture, Paul Ricœur ajoute à la parole et au langage – dans un texte publié en anglais en 1978 – le champ de l'image qui a une dimension sémiotique propre et il pose l'hypothèse que « l'univers de discours approprié à la découverte psychanalytique est moins une linguistique qu'une fantastique générale ». En effet, après avoir indiqué que la reformulation linguistique se heurte au fait que « la psychanalyse ne connait du désir que ce qui peut être dit » , il fait appel aux travaux de linguistique – dont ceux de Jakobson sur la métaphore et la métonymie – pour discuter le point de savoir jusqu'où il est possible de mener une réinterprétation linguistique de la théorie psychanalytique. Ce qui l'amène à affirmer que c'est une erreur « de croire que tout ce qui est sémiotique est linguistique » tout comme de penser que « l'image ne relève pas de l'ordre sémiotique ». S'il part du fait que la technique analytique fait du langage « son champ d'action et l'instrument privilégié de

son efficience », Paul Ricœur souligne que, pour Freud, le matériel psychique du rêve est l'image « considérée dans sa capacité d'exprimer, d'indiquer plastiquement des idées ». Il défend alors le caractère sémiotique du rêve et il pense que le travail du rêve met en jeu des processus qui ont leur équivalent dans le fonctionnement du langage, considérant que l'on est là « à la charnière du langage et de l'image » puisque la mise en image consiste largement en une « présentation visuelle » des pensées du rêve. En restant très proche du texte de Freud – en particulier *L'interprétation du rêve* et la *Présentation au moyen de symboles* – Paul Ricœur fait le lien entre le rêve et la culture : le terme *symbole* est en effet employé par Freud pour désigner des représentations appartenant à la culture, représentations que l'on retrouve dans le rêve autant que dans le folklore, les mythes populaires et les légendes, par exemple. Pour Paul Ricœur, « le problème de la psychanalyse commence avec l'usage privé par le rêveur de ce trésor public des symboles » car c'est toujours un rêveur singulier qui met en scène un motif culturel universel et, dans cette mise en scène, l'empire de l'image sur le langage s'affirme, l'image étant le processus de « transformation des pensées du rêve en contenu manifeste ».

C'est en lien avec la comparaison « absolument primitive » effectuée par Freud entre le rêve, le symptôme, les contes et les mythes que – au cours d'une conférence à Washington en 1974 – Paul Ricœur rappelle l'insistance de ce dernier à souligner les limites de la psychanalyse appliquée à l'art. Il montre alors que cette insistance n'est pas une tactique destinée à abaisser les résistances mais, au contraire, que Freud semble convaincu que la psychanalyse ne peut pas expliquer le don artistique. Après avoir pris en compte, à partir des textes de Freud, les principaux arguments pouvant aller dans le sens du doute de cette sincérité, et toujours en s'appuyant au plus près sur ses écrits, il avance que les scrupules dont il fait état à propos de la création artistique sont identiques à ceux concernant le traitement par la psychanalyse du destin des pulsions. Ainsi, si Paul Ricœur constate qu'il est possible de traiter une œuvre d'art comme un rêve en se fondant sur la possibilité de substituer l'un à l'autre, ou que l'idéologie du génie fait écran à une explication scientifique du don artistique, s'il affirme que Freud a tourné la difficulté en substituant à l'énigme de la créativité la question de l'effet produit sur l'amateur d'art ou s'il considère que le culte du génie en art est taillé de la même étoffe pulsionnelle que celle des génies religieux, il montre que Freud se trouve devant « deux énigmes, similaires et jumelles, de la création et de la sublimation ». Il avance que la sublimation est restée une grande énigme pour Freud et, indiquant que « la sublimation est autant le titre d'un problème que le nom d'une solution », il conclut avec Freud que le don artistique et la capacité de réalisation étant « en rapport intime avec la sublimation, force nous est de reconnaître que l'essence de la réalisation artistique nous est, elle aussi, psychanalytiquement inaccessible ».

On retrouve la question de la sublimation dans un texte que Paul Ricœur publie la même année – 1974 – et

qu'il introduit par la nécessité d'interroger les choses morales « d'une nouvelle manière ». Il rappelle que, pour Freud, tout débute par l'interprétation d'un de ses rêves en se référant au mythe d'*Œdipe-Roi*, ce qui lui fait écrire que « dès le commencement, la psychanalyse est à la fois une théorie de la névrose et une théorie de la culture » et que l'objet de la psychanalyse est le désir humain « saisi dans une relation plus ou moins conflictuelle avec un monde culturel ». Après avoir posé la question de l'éthique de la psychanalyse, il finit par affirmer que c'est parce que la psychanalyse ne peut pas poser le problème du fondement moral qu'elle doit se borner à marquer la place en creux du phénomène, qu'il qualifie de « si important » de la sublimation.

La dernière partie de l'ouvrage est davantage centrée sur les questions touchant au récit et la narrativité dont on sait qu'elles ont occupé une place grandissante dans la réflexion de l'auteur.

Avant d'aborder la place du récit dans la psychanalyse, Paul Ricœur se livre – dans un article paru en anglais en 1986 – à des considérations sur la manière de concevoir l'histoire d'une vie – entre naissance et mort – : il s'interroge sur la pertinence d'affirmations telles que celle de Socrate selon lequel « une vie non examinée n'est pas digne d'être vécue » ou sur le paradoxe selon lequel « les histoires sont racontées et non vécues tandis que la vie est vécue et non racontée ». Affirmant que le vie n'est « qu'un phénomène biologique tant qu'elle n'est pas interprétée », il se demande si, en présence de ce qui est dit, on est dans le récit de la vie vécue ou du côté de la fiction. C'est pour lui l'occasion d'affirmer que l'histoire racontée est toujours plus large que « l'énumération des événements qu'elle organise en un tout intelligible » et que la mise en intrigue est « une synthèse de l'hétérogène ». Et si « un abime semble se creuser entre la fiction et la vie », « c'est l'acte de lecture qui achève l'œuvre » puisque le sens d'un récit « jaillit à l'intersection du monde du texte et du monde du lecteur ». C'est à peine s'il fait alors un lien avec la théorie psychanalytique pour laquelle il se borne à indiquer que son interprétation narrative implique que « l'histoire d'une vie procède d'histoires non racontées », ce qui lui permet de conclure que la fiction narrative est « une dimension irréductible de la compréhension de soi ». À la différence des textes précédents, on semble là bien loin des écrits de Freud qu'il ne mentionne même pas.

Ce qu'il justifie d'ailleurs dans le texte de 1988 en indiquant clairement qu'il n'a pas eu besoin jusque là de « tenir compte de la psychanalyse » dans sa réflexion. Mais comme il est arrivé à la notion d'identité narrative, il ressent la nécessité d'y revenir. Or, s'il revient aux écrits de Freud, ce n'est plus dans la même démarche que celle qu'il avait adoptée jusque là : autant tout ce qu'il avançait était nourri de sa lecture et de son interprétation, autant ici il prend un certaine distance en se disant insatisfait « à l'égard du freudisme ». Il essaie cependant de réinterpréter la psychanalyse en prenant pour point de départ « non pas la théorie mais ce qui se passe dans l'expérience analytique elle même » tout en reconnaissant qu'il lui faut être prudent puisqu'il n'a

pas l'expérience personnelle de la cure. Et de fait, s'il a compris que la cure est bien le lieu où l'analysant peut tirer de morceaux d'histoires un récit de vie plus intelligible ou plus supportable, il ne fait pas mention du fait que l'élaboration d'un tel récit peut apparaître comme une rationalisation défensive, comme si seul l'agencement des séquences faisait sens alors que les fragments et les trous sont tout autant signifiants. Sans doute faut-il voir là la limite de son approche et davantage les fruits de son propre travail sur ces questions.

Ce troisième aspect de la réflexion de Paul Ricœur lecteur de Freud est un peu différent du fait de l'absence des textes auxquels il se rapportait bien davantage dans ses écrits précédents. Cependant, il ne s'éloigne qu'apparemment de Freud dans la mesure où ses références restent sous-jacentes dans sa réflexion, manière d'être toujours « autour de la psychanalyse » comme le suggère le titre du recueil. Surtout, on ne peut oublier la manière dont l'auteur a procédé le plus souvent jusque là : une très grande attention aux textes de Freud, une grande vigilance à ne pas les instrumentaliser, un souci toujours présent de rester interrogé par ses lectures, le refus de se laisser dominer par un discours philosophique trop marqué. Sans compter qu'il reste sans arrêt attentif à la dimension pratique de la démarche psychanalytique tout en étant très sensible à la complexité de l'œuvre dont il entreprend de rendre compte.

La succession de ces textes, traces discontinues de la confrontation de l'auteur avec l'œuvre de Freud, laisse

entendre que ce dernier a vraisemblablement marqué l'ensemble de l'itinéraire réflexif de Paul Ricœur.

Thèses

Recension par Catherine Yelnik

5 avril 2011

Des premières monographies du Courant psychanalytique de la pédagogie institutionnelle à la formation des enseignants du second degré aujourd'hui

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sd. Claudine Blanchard-Laville

Jury : Jean-François Chiantaretto (Paris XIII), François Dosse (Paris Est Créteil), Gilles Monceau (Cergy-Pontoise), Antoine Savoye (Paris 8).

La première partie de ce travail est une enquête historique menée à partir de sources variées. Le mouvement pédagogique habituellement nommé « pédagogie institutionnelle » est né en France dans les années 1960 et s'est rapidement divisé en deux courants, dont l'un est fortement influencé par la psychanalyse. Ce courant psychanalytique de la pédagogie institutionnelle s'est constitué autour des figures de Fernand Oury et Aïda Vasquez, auteurs en 1967 de Vers une pédagogie institutionnelle, dans lequel sont publiées six monographies commentées. L'auteur montre que l'écriture de monographies est une pratique ancienne dans le champ éducatif et prend sa source dans différents champs. Cette pratique, largement répandue avant 1967, est renouvelée par le courant psychanalytique de la pédagogie institutionnelle à partir de 1962.

Dans une deuxième partie, l'auteur inscrit ce travail dans une approche d'orientation psychanalytique. Questionnant son rapport à son objet de recherche, il s'appuie sur ses élaborations contre-transférentielles pour faire émerger ses questions de recherche. Il décrit ensuite un dispositif d'analyse des pratiques professionnelles qu'il met en place, en tant que formateur, dans le cadre de la formation des enseignants débutants du second degré. Dans ce dispositif qu'il propose de nommer « groupe monographique », les enseignants en formation sont invités à écrire des monographies. L'analyse d'un corpus de monographies produites dans ce cadre est à l'origine d'hypothèses sur les processus psychiques à l'œuvre pour les enseignants débutants dans leurs remaniements identitaires.

La question du groupe

Appel à contributions

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Résumés – abstracts

To Think or Not to Think. A Phenomenological and Psychoanalytic Perspective on Experience, Thinking and Creativity

Lene Auestad

Résumé

En juxtaposant les réflexions de Bion et d'Arendt sur la "pensée" en tant qu'activité provoquée par l'expérience, l'article interroge les conditions requises pour l'ouverture aux différences dans les situations nouvelles rencontrées. De manières très différentes, les deux théoriciens mettent en lumière comment la pensée s'appuie sur certaines conditions sociales, et que l'individu ne se suffit pas à lui-même pour produire et percevoir le sens. L'argument est que l'acquisition d'un cadre conceptuel implique une fermeture épistémique aussi bien qu'un enrichissement et que la pensée repose simultanément sur un profond sentiment de sécurité et la volonté de risquer ses étayages.
Mots clés : Arendt, Bion, sens, pluralité, pensée

Abstract

Juxtaposing Bion's and Arendt's reflections on 'thinking' as an activity provoked by experience, the article aims to question the preconditions for openness to the differences of new situations encountered. Both theorists, in very different ways, illuminate how thinking rests on some social conditions, how the individual is not self-sufficient as a producer/perceiver of meaning. It is argued that the acquisition of a conceptual framework involves an epistemic closure as well as enrichment, and that thinking rests jointly on a fundamental felt security and willingness to risk one's supporting frameworks.

Keywords: Arendt, Bion, meaning, plurality, thinking

Encounters with knowledge

Alan Bainbridge

Résumé

Il est bien établi qu'au cours du début de carrière des professeurs, il y a une tendance à favoriser l'expérience pratique par rapport à un investissement dans le savoir professionnel. Ce chapitre évoque le caractère attrayant de l'expérience et comment les contextes éducatifs peuvent fournir un environnement professionnel unique. Cet environnement est caractérisé par une réaction transférentielle intensifiée qui met en conflit le personnel et le professionnel. Il est reconnu que l'émotion précède la cognition, ce qui contribue à expliquer ce phénomène. La tension produite par la rencontre avec le nouveau savoir crée un ensemble de défenses qui résistent à ce qui est perçu comme une attaque du soi. La raison invoquée est que le désir « de ne pas savoir » pose problème aux nouveaux professionnels et que le savoir ne peut pas simplement être transféré, mais plutôt qu'il est fondamental de créer les conditions pour encourager une disposition à apprendre.

Abstract

It is well reported that during the early career development of teachers' there is a tendency to favour practical experience over an engagement with professional knowledge. This chapter considers the seductive nature of experience and how educational settings may offer a unique professional environment. This environment is characterised by a heightened transference response that brings the personal and professional into conflict. It is acknowledged that affect proceeds cognition, which goes some way towards explaining this phenomenon. The tension produced by the encounter with new knowledge creates an array of defences that resist what is perceived as an attack on the self. It is argued that the desire 'not to know' is problematic for new professionals and that knowledge cannot simply be transferred but rather, providing conditions to encourage a disposition to learn is paramount.

Margot's Red Shoes. When Psychic Reality Challenges Teaching

Anne Bastin, Philippe Chaussecourte

Résumé

Un professeur d'école primaire étudie les processus intra- et intersubjectifs à l'œuvre dans un contexte d'enseignement ordinaire. Elle a composé une monographie de recherche référée à la psychanalyse basée sur l'observation d'une petite fille dans sa classe, en participant à un groupe d'analyse de pratiques professionnelles. Un épisode de cette étude fournit un exemple qui tente de dévoiler certains processus psychiques inconscients dans la relation entre une élève et son/sa professeur-e.

Mots clés : Relation professeur/élève, processus psychiques, monographie, groupe d'analyse des pratiques professionnelles, identité professionnelle

Abstract

A primary school teacher investigates intra and intersubjective processes at work in an ordinary teaching setting. She has composed a psychoanalytically informed research monograph based on the observation of a little girl in her class, while attending a professional practices analysis group. An episode of this study provides a case in point that endeavours to unveil some of the unconscious psychic processes involved in the relationship between a pupil and her teacher.

Keywords: teacher/pupil relationship, psychic processes, monograph, professional practices analysis group, professional identity

Self-Respect, Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem: psychoanalytic and philosophical implications for Higher Education

Tony Brown, Mark Murphy

Résumé

La position néo-libérale des gouvernements anglais successifs sape les tentatives que font les professeurs, étudiants et pédagogues dans l'enseignement supérieur pour explorer les dynamiques relationnelles liées à l'enseignement et à

l'apprentissage. Les programmes néo-libéraux cherchent au contraire à présenter l'apprentissage des étudiants comme essentiellement centré sur l'emploi et motivé par le revenu. Ceci a pour effet de négliger l'influence mutuelle des professeurs et des étudiants dans l'enseignement supérieur et de nier la dynamique relationnelle. De plus, cela réduit le processus d'apprentissage à de la formation pour l'emploi. Les auteurs rejettent ce point de vue étroit au profit de l'ouverture d'un débat sur les processus relationnels dans l'apprentissage, sous l'angle de l'affectivité qui accompagne toujours l'apprentissage, l'enseignement et la recherche académique dans une discipline. Il y a des liens importants entre les approches philosophiques de l'éducation, telles que la théorie critique d'Alec Honneth, et la théorie psychanalytique de l'école des relations d'objet. Honneth explore le développement en utilisant un langage qui renvoie directement à Freud, Klein et Winnicott. Il présente l'acquisition du savoir sur soi, l'autre et la discipline académique comme à la fois pénible et dangereuse. Ce lien entre la théorie critique et la théorie psychanalytique constitue la base d'un débat sur la dynamique de l'apprentissage dans l'enseignement supérieur comme processus non linéaire et justifie le besoin d'une nouvelle conceptualisation de l'apprentissage comme activité relationnelle dans laquelle la reconnaissance intersubjective est une composante clé dans les résultats de l'éducation.

Mots clés : psychologie relationnelle, philosophie, reconnaissance de soi, reconnaissance intersubjective, théorie critique

Abstract

The neo-liberal position of successive UK governments undermines attempts by teachers, students and pedagogues in higher education to investigate the relational dynamics associated with teaching and learning. Instead, neo-liberal agendas seek to present student learning as predominantly employment focused and outcome driven. This has the effect of neglecting the mutual influence of teachers and students in HE, denying a relational dynamic. Further, it reduces the learning process to training for employment. The authors reject this narrow position in favour of opening up discussion about relational processes in learning, seen in terms of the ever-present affectivity that accompanies learning and teaching and the academic pursuit of a subject discipline. There is an important connection between philosophical approaches to education, as seen in Alex Honneth's critical theory, and the psychoanalytic theory of the Object Relations School. Honneth explores self-development using language that connects directly with Freud, Klein and Winnicott. He presents the acquisition of knowledge of: self; other; and the academic discipline, as both troublesome and dangerous. This connection between critical theory and psychoanalytic theory forms the basis for a discussion of the dynamics of higher education learning as a non-linear process and the need for a re-conceptualisation of learning as a relational activity where inter-subjective recognition is a key component in educational outcomes.

Keywords : relational psychology, philosophy, self-recognition, inter-subjective recognition, critical theory

Playing with Adults

Jacki Cartlidge

Résumé

L'article soutient que le « jeu », selon le terme de Winnicott, est important pour les adultes aussi bien que pour les enfants et discute les effets potentiellement positifs de l'utilisation d'une approche auto/biographique dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage. L'article se réfère à la théorie de la relation d'objet de Winnicott, qui met l'accent sur l'importance de la première relation d'objet avec la mère et sur l'espace transitionnel qu'elle peut offrir pour aider le sujet à négocier sa toute première relation d'objet réussie.

Est ensuite introduite une étude de cas d'une professeure travaillant avec le chercheur dans un cadre auto/biographique faisant partie d'un projet de doctorat. L'étude de cas relie le récit de la professeure à une interprétation winnicottienne, tandis qu'elle se remémore des espaces de sécurité, d'autres personnes qui ont compté, la créativité et le jeu, la lecture et l'imagination, et comment elle les a utilisés de manière réflexive pour nourrir son propre enseignement.

Enfin, l'article montre que la professeure, en travaillant avec des élèves qui avaient été considérés comme « en échec », a été capable de les aider à dépasser les limites de leurs expériences d'apprentissage antérieures, leurs attentes sociales et leur image de soi. Il est possible pour un professeur de créer un espace transitionnel sécurisant dans la classe et en introduisant de bons objets transitionnels. En devenant un autre qui compte, cette professeure a été capable d'aider au développement personnel et au progrès éducatif de ses élèves.

Mots clés : jeu, espace transitionnel, objets transitionnels

Abstract

The paper argues that `playing', as Winnicott uses the term, is of importance to adults as well children, and discusses the positive potential in using an auto/biographical approach in teaching and learning. The paper refers to Winnicott's object relations' theory, that emphasizes the importance of the first object relationship with the mother and transitional space she can provide to help the subject negotiate its earliest successful object relationship.

A case study of a teacher is then introduced who is working with the researcher in an auto/biographical framework as part of a PhD project. The case study relates the teacher's narrative to a Winnicottian interpretation as she recalls safe spaces, significant others, creativity and play, reading and imagination, and using them reflexively to inform her own teaching.

Finally the paper indicates that the teacher, working with students who had been deemed `failing', was able to help them transcend the limitations of their previous learning experiences, societal expectations, and self image. It is possible for a teacher to create a safe transitional space in the classroom and by introducing good transitional objects, and becoming a significant other, she was able to help in the development of self and the educational progress of her

students.

Keywords : playing, transitional spaces, transitional objects, significant others

Cross identification analysis in the class

Laure Castelnau & Claudine Blanchard-Laville

Résumé

Cette communication rend compte d'une recherche clinique en cours en sciences de l'éducation. L'événement déclencheur de la recherche a été le récit oral par une enseignante d'une situation de classe concernant un élève de sa classe dans un groupe clinique d'analyse de pratiques professionnelles et le travail groupal auquel il a donné lieu. Dans la perspective d'une recherche universitaire, l'enseignante a rédigé, à l'issue de l'année scolaire, un journal d'une dizaine de pages racontant l'année de cet élève dans sa classe. Ce récit constitue le temps t1 de la recherche. Le temps t2 a été le temps de reprise de ce journal dans un deuxième récit avec une visée plus théorisante. Le récit du temps t3, le temps actuel, permet d'avoir un regard rétrospectif sur les deux récits préalables et d'envisager la fonction distincte que chacun d'eux occupe dans la démarche de recherche dont il est fait état ici : une fonction de témoin externe pour le récit du temps t1, induisant une première distanciation à l'égard de la posture de praticienne réflexive participante d'un groupe d'analyse de pratiques et une fonction de familiarisation avec une démarche clinique de recherche pour le deuxième récit.

Mots clés : analyse des pratiques professionnelles, éducation, démarche clinique de recherche

Abstract

This paper records a current clinical research project in educational sciences. The event triggering this research was a teacher's oral account of a class situation concerning a pupil in her class to a clinical group of analysis of professional practices, and the subsequent group work arising from this.

Within the perspective of university research, the teacher, at the end of the school year, wrote a journal of some ten pages recounting the pupil's year in her class. This account represents the time t1 of the research. The time t2 was the revision of this journal in a second account with a more theoretical aim. The time t3 account, the present time, permits a retrospective look at the first two accounts and to consider the separate role each of them played in the research under consideration here: for the first t1 account a function of an exterior witness, inducing a first distancing in the position of a reflecting practitioner participating in a group of practical analysis, and for the second account a function of familiarizing with a clinical research process.

Keywords: clinical group of analysis of professional practices, education, clinical research process

The Current Educational System as the Enemy of Experiential Learning

Anastasios Gaitanidis

Résumé

Le propos de cet article est de présenter une critique détaillée de la tendance actuelle du système éducatif à saper les capacités critiques des étudiants et celles d'apprendre de l'expérience.

Après une brève exploration de l'évolution historique et du contenu de l'idée libérale de l'éducation, ou Bildung, qui a simultanément réprimé et encouragé la pensée critique et l'autonomie des étudiants, j'étudie la forme actuelle du service éducatif, qui peut être qualifiée de Halbbildung ou "demi-éducation". Je soutiens que cette sorte d'éducation suit la tendance des mass media puisqu'elle banalise son sujet de manière à le rendre immédiatement accessible et digestible par l'auditoire étudiant. Ce faisant, elle interdit aux étudiants de faire le genre d'expériences qui les aiderait à développer une capacité de pensée critique leur permettant de s'opposer véritablement aux formes inacceptables d'oppression sociale. C'est pourquoi je propose que les contributions psychanalytiques concernant la nature de l'angoisse soient utilisées pour mettre fin à la destruction active de la conscience critique des étudiants et percer l'enveloppe dure et froide de leur subjectivité moderne. A cet égard, une compréhension psychanalytique de l'angoisse des étudiants pourrait fournir les bases d'une nouvelle éducation capable « d'insight » et critique, à élaborer pour l'avenir.

Mots clés : Bildung, Halbbildung, psychanalyse, dureté, froideur, angoisse

Abstract

The main aim of this paper is to provide a comprehensive criticism of the current educational system's tendency to undermine the students' critical and experiential abilities. After a brief exploration of the historical development and content of the liberal idea of education, or Bildung, which simultaneously oppressed and fostered the students' critical thinking and autonomy, I examine the present form of educational provision which can be characterised as Halbbildung or 'half-education'. I argue that this kind of education follows the trend of the mass media since it trivialises its subject matter so as to make it immediately accessible and digestible to its student audience. In so doing, it denies the students the kinds of experiences which could help them develop their ability to think critically in order to genuinely assert themselves against unacceptable forms of social oppression. For this reason, I propose that psychoanalytic contributions regarding the nature of anxiety should be employed in order to arrest the active destruction of the students' critical consciousness and break through the hard and cold exterior of their modern subjectivity. In this respect, a psychoanalytic understanding of the students' anxiety could provide the foundations for a new 'insightful' and critical education, an education to be worked out in the future.

Keywords: Bildung, Halbbildung, Psychoanalysis, Hardness, Coldness, Anxiety

The psychologist profession: learning from emotions in the university context

Cesàro Nunziante

Résumé

Le choix de devenir psychologue clinicien repose sur des dimensions émotionnelles, relationnelles et personnelles autant que sur une approche théorique. Par conséquent, enseigner la psychologie clinique ne peut pas être uniquement un "transfert de connaissances", une pratique de réflexion sur soi est importante également. C'est pourquoi le curriculum universitaire doit inclure la dimension expérientielle, qui, comme Bion l'a dit, peut faciliter « l'apprentissage par l'expérience ». Faire une expérience dans un contexte de formation signifie essentiellement se tester soi-même (se mettre à l'épreuve) et acquérir l'expérience de soi-même, en confrontant les connaissances acquises avec les émotions suscitées dans la pratique, avec les compétences réelles et désirées. Ce chapitre a pour but de décrire l'expérience menée à Naples, à l'université Federico II, où le cours de psychologie clinique a été conçu pour comprendre des leçons expérimentales centrées sur les dimensions émotionnelles des étudiants et sur le processus d'apprentissage issu d'une expérience de soi.

Mots clés : enseignement de psychologie Clinique, apprendre en faisant, dimension émotionnelle, leçons expérimentales

Abstract

The choice of becoming clinical psychologist relies on emotional, relational and personal dimensions as well as on a theoretical approach. Therefore teaching clinical psychology cannot be only a "transfer of knowledge", as a practice of self-reflection seems important too. This is the reason why the university curricula needs to include the experiential dimension, which can, like Bion said, facilitate "learning from experience. Experiencing something in a formative context principally means to test oneself and to gain experience of oneself, by confronting the acquired cognitions with the emotions evoked during the practice, with real and desired competences. This chapter aims to describe the experience carried on in Naples at the University "Federico II" where the Clinical Psychology class was conceived to include experimental lessons focused on the student's emotional dimensions and on the learning process coming from a self-experience.

Keywords: Teaching Clinical Psychology, learning by doing, emotional dimension, experimental lessons

Good-enough or omnipotent trainers

Jean-Luc Rinaudo

Résumé

Dans le contexte de la formation des enseignants en France, l'auteur étudie les postures de formateurs sur des forums électroniques qui oscillent entre toute-

puissance, probablement favorisée par les représentations autour des technologies de l'information et de la communication et une position « suffisamment bonne » qui ouvre un espace transitionnel dans lequel l'enseignant en formation peut expérimenter la capacité à être seul.

Mots clés : TIC, forum électronique, formation des enseignants, omnipotence, capacité à être seul, espace transitionnel

Abstract

In this text, the author identify trainers and trainees' practices on forum. In one hand, trainer's position is omnipotence (as a normal component for teaching that proceeds from a drive which supports the desire to teach and care for others). Information and communication technologies accentuate probably this aspect. In the other hand, there are "good-enough" trainer. In this unconscious position, like a "good-enough mother" with her child, trainers have to contain and create a transitional space where trainees could play and be in capacity to be alone.

Keywords: ICT, forum, teachers training, omnipotence, capacity to be alone, transitional space

Along the continua: mentally ill artist students uninterrupted

Olivia Sagan

Résumé

Ce chapitre rend compte d'une recherche avec un groupe d'étudiants en arts, qui avaient tous un passé de mauvaise santé mentale. Des entretiens biographiques longitudinaux ont construit un portrait intime des différentes lignes de continuum que ces étudiants étaient en train de négocier. Y étaient décrits les extrêmes de la santé et de la maladie, avec le contraste douloureux entre la « production créative accélérée » (Jaques, 1965 : 229) et le désespoir de la coupure.

Y tenait une place importante le récit de la lutte pour situer une pratique artistique en développement ressentie tantôt comme thérapie, catharsis autobiographique, ou comme contenu neuf en rupture avec les entraves abrutissantes de l'histoire, de la pathologie, de la classe sociale. Représentant les réflexions d'étudiants sur une période de trois ans, ces récits nous montrent l'importance des décisions apparemment prosaïques et des détails quotidiens de la vie avec la maladie mentale. Mais ils imposent également une appréciation plus approfondie des actes de réparation (Klein, 1998) accomplis au fur et à mesure que la psyché lutte pour l'intégration.

Mots clés : maladie mentale, pratique artistique, récit, continuum

Abstract

This paper reports on research with a group of art students, each of whom had a history of mental ill health. Longitudinal biographic narrative interviews built an intimate portrait of the different lines of continua these students were negotiating. The extremes of health and illness were narrated, with the painful contrast between 'rapid-fire creative production' (Jaques, 1965: 229) and the despair of hiatus.

Prominent was the narrative of striving to locate a developing artistic practice felt variously as therapy, autobiographic catharsis, or pristine content breaking with the stultifying bonds of history, pathology, class. Representing students' reflections over a span of three years, these narratives show us the importance of the seemingly prosaic decisions and daily minutiae of living with mental illness. But they also command a deeper appreciation of how acts of reparation (Klein, 1998) are made as the psyche strives for integration.

Keywords: mental illness, artistic practice, narrative, continua

When Teacher's Counter-Transference Strikes Learning: Mourning in School

Alper Sahin

Résumé

Ce chapitre tente d'examiner l'impact du transfert et du contre-transfert dans des contextes scolaires. Il soutient qu'une compréhension du processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage requiert une prise en considération du phénomène psychique. L'impact du deuil sur la pensée et la relation aux autres est discuté. Des études de cas sont utilisées pour montrer comment la conscience du contre-transfert dans des contextes scolaires peut être abordé à travers des « réponses transférentielles ».

Mots clés : transfert, contre-transfert, deuil

Abstract

This chapter seeks to explore the impact of transference and counter-transference in school settings. It is argued that an understanding of the process of teaching and learning requires an appreciation of psychic phenomenon. A discussion of the impact of mourning on thinking and relating to others is provided. Case studies are then used to indicate how an awareness of counter-transference in school settings are explored via 'transferential responses'.

Keywords: Transference, counter-transference, mourning

Learning through ourselves: the supervision group as a training tool

Delli Veneri A., Nunziante Cesàro A., Boursier V.

Résumé

Le groupe de supervision favorise chez les participants un apprentissage par le faire, à travers leurs expériences propres, les significations émotionnelles des conduites et de toute la difficulté relationnelle qui surgit dans un contexte clinique aussi bien que dans un contexte de formation. Ce chapitre se centre sur le groupe de supervision conçu comme contexte de formation où le psychologue peut apprendre de son expérience directe et du retour que lui fait le groupe dans son ensemble. Le pouvoir formateur de cet outil a été éprouvé dans deux différents domaines : le rôle d'un groupe de supervision dans le projet « Nidi di Mamme » (nid de mères) et le groupe de supervision pour psychologues et psychothérapeutes impliqués dans la procédure de diagnostic psychologique des

troubles d'identités de genre. L'importance du groupe de supervision a donc été prouvée aussi bien pour le processus d'apprentissage tout au long de la vie des acteurs que pour leur conscience individuelle.

Mots clés : Supervision en groupe, apprendre en faisant, compte-rendu écrit, conscience du psychologue, trouble d'identité de genre

Abstract

Group supervision promotes in its participants a learning by doing, through their own experiences, of the emotional meanings, of behaviours and of every relational difficulty emerging in the clinical setting as well as in the formative one. This chapter focuses on the supervision group conceived as a training context where the psychologist can learn from his direct experience and from the feedback received by the group as a whole. The learning strength of this tool has been experimented in two different domains: the role of group supervision in the project "Nidi di Mamme" (Mothers' Nests) and the supervision group for psychologists and psychotherapists involved in the psycho-diagnostic procedure for GID (Gender Identity Disorder). The importance of supervision group has been therefore proved for what concerns operators' lifelong learning process, as well as for their individual awareness.

Keywords: Group supervision, learning by doing, written self-report, psychologist's awareness, Gender Identity Disorder

The psychologist intervention in at-risk educational settings: remarks on the teacher-student relationship

Anna Zurolo, Alessandra Delli Veneri

Résumé

Cette contribution illustre une intervention psychologique dans le cadre de programmes d'action nationaux conçus par le gouvernement italien, avec le soutien financier de la Commission Européenne (F.S.E. 2007-2013). L'intervention a été confiée par une école secondaire du sud de l'Italie à des membres de l'Université de Naples (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II) autour de plusieurs thèmes, comprenant l'aide à l'apprentissage et les techniques de gestion des interactions entre professeur et élèves dans une école où le pourcentage d'abandon est élevé. L'intervention a concerné particulièrement les professeurs des deux premières années.

Grâce à des vignettes cliniques et de courts extraits, nous illustrerons les différents éléments et les problèmes d'une intervention profondément inspirée par les théories et techniques psychanalytiques. Par ailleurs, pour éclairer l'inconfort de travailler dans une école considérée comme « poste frontière », les professeurs ont pu faire l'expérience d'une compréhension plus approfondie de l'angoisse et de la détresse immédiatement après l'abandon scolaire de leurs élèves. Il a également été possible d'entrevoir des hypothèses de changement possible concernant un problème jusqu'ici peu élucidé.

Mots clés : abandon scolaire, émotion, relations professeur-élèves, techniques narratives

Abstract

This contribution illustrates a psychological intervention connected to the frame of operative national programs (PON) conceived by Italian government, according to the financial support by European Committee (F.S.E. 2007-2013). The intervention was committed by a Secondary School of Southern Italy to some members of the University of Naples (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II) and focused on different topics, including the learning facilitation and the management techniques of the teacher-student interaction in a school with a high level of drop out percentage. The intervention was specifically directed to teachers of the first two years.

We will illustrate, through clinical fragments and short excerpts, the different elements and the issues that characterized an intervention deeply inspired to psychoanalytic theories and techniques; besides to make clear the discomfort in working in a so-called "frontier post school", teachers could experience a deeper insight about the anxiety and bewilderment which often follow the school abandon by their students. It was also possible to detect possible change hypotheses concerning a problem up to that moment poorly clear.

Keywords: drop out, emotion, teacher-student relationship, narration techniques