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Editorial

The word Culture derives from the Latin cultura stemming from colere, meaning ‘to cultivate’ and generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activity significance. Anthropologists most commonly use the term ‘culture’ to refer to the universal human capacity to classify, codify and communicate their experiences symbolically. The idea of Culture, encompassing all these meanings and connotations, seems to loom large in this issue of Contexts which continues the work of providing a forum for communicating about Group Analytic activities across different cultures and societies. Hopefully, this publication itself plays a small part in cultivating a culture of shared meanings and understandings in the Group Analytic world.

We have, then, three pieces from the Czech Republic, one of these a report about a recent workshop, the other an interesting and illuminating article about the development of Group Analysis in that country, and the third an account of how a personal and creative link between London and the Czech Republic has fostered a continuing focus on the effects of social trauma – this links with the subject of this year’s Foulkes weekend on Second Generation Perpetrator Syndrome. There are three commentaries, provided by small group leaders at that event, from this Study Day which was held in London in May. The contributors of these accounts come from the Irish Republic and Greece. We also have a number of contributions from the Portuguese speaking world: from Portugal an account of running groups within a physical health setting, and a piece on Woody Allen’s recent film *Scoop*; and from Brazil a theoretical article. There is an interesting report from Serbia about the impact of cultural differences within the large group that is EGATIN. Then there is, of course, our new Culture section with two pieces about films, one recent and one made in the 1950’s. Both films are embedded in the culture of the United States although they have universal resonance. Trevor Mumby provides a piece on the developing culture of the GAS Forum which we hope will continue to

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develop as a significant mode of sharing ideas and perspectives and developing our own Group Analytic culture. Lauren Storck makes another kind of appeal for connections to be made between practitioners with similar interests and experiences.

All of this writing and activity seems to us to be part of the cultivating aspect of culture, of sharing and communication experiences, of developing identity and forming links. Long may this continue.

Terry Birchmore and Paula Carvalho

President's Page

The interplay between the national and international levels of GAS is an ongoing theme in discussions in the MC. To me and many others, the need for a local British 'Chapter' of GAS to take care of British needs and interests and for an international GAS to take care of international needs and interests, seems obvious. In many countries there exist local GAS's together with local IGA's. Meetings between representatives from the IGA (London) and GAS are continuing, and we are slowly working towards a model for co-operation. I would like to take this opportunity to invite members to discuss the future structure GAS in Contexts and on the Forum. It is essential that we find a model that adapts better to the modern world of internationalisation and to the benefit of group analysis.

An example of strengthening the local scene in an international context is the forthcoming Autumn Workshop to be held in Sunderland in the north of England from 2nd to 4th November 2007. Sally Mitchison is chairing the Workshop. The theme is 'Group Analytic Praxis. Adaptation and Applications of Group Analysis in Public Health Services: What a group can accomplish for its members'. Very interesting indeed in these times of short term treatment and quick results, which makes it difficult to promote classical long term group therapy except in private practice. I do hope that as many as possible from all corners of Europe and elsewhere will take part in this Workshop.

I am very much looking forward to it because of the theme, and because it will give me the opportunity to see a part of England I have never seen before.

The Annual General meeting (AGM) will also take place in Sunderland immediately after the Autumn Workshop on the 4th November. The Agenda and relevant material will be circulated in due course.

The Annual Foulkes Lecture and Study Day, one of the highlights of the Group Analytic year, took place in London 18th–19 May 2007. Gerhard Wilke gave the Lecture entitled ‘Second Generation Perpetrator Syndrome in Groups’. Gerhard touched upon a controversial theme with brilliance and great understanding. Anne Lindhardt from Denmark was the Respondent. She took as her starting point one of Hans Christian Andersen’s fairytales ‘The Shadow’. The following day the theme of the lecture was further developed by Dieter Nitzgen from Germany, and Sue Einhorn from London. Both events attracted many people, and were an occasion to meet old friends and colleagues and to make new connections, as well to share thoughts and feelings about the theme of the lecture and study day.

At the end of June, Anne Lindhardt, the Chairman of the International Development Committee, Earl Hopper, Chairman of the Scientific Committee, and I took part in a group analytic workshop in Prague as invited guests and speakers. As I mentioned in the last issue of *Contexts*, the first stages in group analysis in Prague were taken with the help of group analysts from London, and later the training proper was conducted by a team of Danish group analysts from the IGA, Copenhagen, among others, Anne Lindhardt. The theme of the workshop was ‘Group Analysis: Inspiration and Practical Tool for Professionals’. Earl and Anne each gave a lecture respectively on supervision and the social unconscious. The workshop attracted around 45 participants in spite of the start of the Czech holiday season. Surprisingly many of these were young people, which is a good promise for the future. It was a very successful event and well planned by the Local Organising Committee headed by Helena Klimova. Group analysis is certainly alive in Prague. The Czechs have a long tradition for group therapy as such, but only in recent years have they developed training in group analysis. It was also a great experience to be in Prague, one of

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the most beautiful cities of Europe, and to enjoy the excellent hospitality of Helena and her colleagues.

The 14th European Symposium in Group Analysis ‘Despair, Dialogue and Desire’ in Dublin in August 2008 is going according to plan. The Local Organising Committee, under the chairmanship of Liz O’Connor, and the Scientific Committee under the chairmanship of Jacinta Kennedy, are busy putting together a truly interesting and exciting programme. It is possible to get all the relevant information on www.dublin-gas-symposium.com where you can also see when to register. The registration begins in September.

I will end with a small vignette. Lately I stumbled upon an article in a newspaper describing underwater hurricanes or storms much more violent than the ones above water. The underwater storms arise because of different temperatures and content of salt, which cause variation in specific gravity which starts the water moving. As the earth moves around its axis, giant swirls are generated which can last for months. In contrast to the storms above the water, the underwater storms seem to be extremely useful for the creatures of the sea, because the swirls bring up nutrients, dead plants, etc. from the ocean floor. If these underwater storms were not there the oceans would be rather like deserts, as light only penetrates for 100 metres, and it is only within this area that plants can live. It is a very illuminating metaphor for the group and for the importance and creativity of the unconscious. I see the differences in salt and temperature as the differences of the group members which set in motion the emotionality and thinking of the group, and stir up things from the unconscious (the underwater storms) which can be like nutrients. If, on the other hand, there are no underwater movements, if repression or denial is too strong, there is not much creativity.

Gerda Winther
President, GAS

Emotional Experience, Experience, Links and Psychotherapy

Waldemar José Fernandes

'There was not enough attention paid to the fact that, in the expression 'objective relationship', the word 'relationship' was the most important one. In other words, the study of relationships is, first and foremost, that of the connecting links than that of the terms united by those links'. André Green (1988)

Introduction

In modern psychoanalysis the expressions, emotional experience, link, and psychotherapy, are inevitably associated. Although they have been widely used in academic articles and everyday language, their definition has not always been explained. This article attempts to explain and reflect on these terms.

In the beginning of the book *On Learning From Experience* (1962), Bion (1) states that: '. . .this book will have failed if its own reading is not an emotional experience. My hope is that this is an experience which leads to an enhancement of the therapist's ability to move his own resources of knowledge, clinical observation, theoretical construction . . .'

If we do a complete reading of Bion's works, we will see that, for this author, emotional experience is a key expression, 'which underlines emphatically the difference that exists, in the therapeutic situation, between learning about things and emotional learning with the experience of things' (Zimerman (2)). Bion highlights the concepts, therefore, of experience and emotion.

The word experience, in several dictionaries, has a number of important meanings: the act or effect of experiencing and knowledge acquired due to the data provided through life itself. The adjective emotional, though, is referred to emotion, which according to the *Dicionário etimológico de Cunha* (3) comes from the French *émotion*, which derives from the Latin word *emovere* – to put in motion. In other words, it is formed through a specific impulsive action, a movement of the mind.

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To us, emotion is related to the impulses, which are in the dimension of mind-soma, representing on the psyche that which is generated inside the organism. The impulses' goal is always towards satisfaction. As Zimerman states: (2):

'The mental representative of the impulse connected to the object is that of the unconscious fantasy and the object subjected to the impact of the impulse generates the emotional experience in unconsciousness. From there, Bion suggests, the emotion seeks a form of expression and a symbolic representation to be conceived'.

Therefore, the link between emotional experience and unconscious fantasy is interlinked and inseparable.

Unconscious Fantasies

The unconscious fantasies, the mental correspondents of the impulses, are active and ubiquitous. Depending on their nature and how they relate to external reality, alterations in individual psychological characteristics may become apparent (4). The 'ideas' which represent the impulses are the original primitive fantasies. The impulse action is represented by the fantasy of satisfaction of this instinct by an adequate motionless object; being experienced as real physical events. If the emotional experience is a feeling of pain, the psyche may have a visual image of someone crying, yelling, or events similar to these; an ideogram, which can generate narratives of traumatic situations real or seen in a horror movie, for instance.

David E. Zimerman, in his *Vocabulário contemporâneo de psicanálise* of 2001 (2) reflects about Klein and especially Susan Isaacs, emphasising that (in a paraphrase): a) the fantasies, beyond representing the mind impulses, are also representations of the defense mechanisms against the impulses' demands; b) they are innate and primarily unconscious; c) they are beliefs in the activity of internal objects, identified as they were tactful objects.

To Susan Isaacs, the fantasies derive from the Id matrix

'... the fantasy is the link which exists between the id impulses and the ego mechanisms, the means through which one is transformed into the other. . . I wanted to eat that, therefore, I ate it, is a fantasy which represents the impulsion of the id into psycho-

logical life; at the same time, it is the subjective experience of the mechanism of the introjective function'. (5)

Experiences in reality influence and are influenced by unconscious fantasies, which accompany invariably and inevitably real experiences, with whom they establish an interaction. They are constantly influencing and altering the perception and the interpretation of reality, which, in the same way, exercise an impact on unconscious fantasy, and may it be supporting it, feeding it or opposing it.

The principle of reality is only the principle of pleasure modified by the test of reality. Intellectual thought is a modification of unconscious fantasy, processed, evolved. This was exhaustively studied by Bion, who referred to the link with knowledge.

'The richness, the depth and the accuracy of a person's intellectual thought will depend on the quality and flexibility of their unconscious fantasy life and the ability to submit it to the test of reality'. (6)

Link and linkage processes

Frequently, the term 'link' or 'to link' is used, but there are disagreements and a certain conceptual confusion about the term. My own definition is that a 'link is a relationship structure between two or more people and also between the same parts of one person, a situation where an emotional experience occurs' (Fernandes, W. J.; Svartman, B.; Fernandes, B. S., 2003) (7). The idea of the link encompasses ideas about transference and counter-transference.

In these inter-relationships that we study in utilising the link concept, there are always three main spaces or dimensions, and any of them may be dominant at any time, depending on the moment: intra-subjective, inter-subjective and tran-subjective:

1. The intra-subjective dimension encompasses the inter-relationship of internalised objects, as they consciously link; pcs and ics, the thoughts with the feelings, id, ego and super-ego, the internal groups among themselves etc.
2. The inter-subjective dimension involves how each one of us relates to one another.

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3. The tran-subjective dimension, though, has to do with the diverse modes of linking with the rules, laws and values, with the society and the culture of each region and with the unconscious fantasies which we all share, contained in the myths, legends and other original narratives and collective productions.

Some of the most important thinkers of Argentina, such as Puget, Berenstein, Bernard, among others, understand only the interpersonal level. (8). In any of its meanings, in psychoanalytic thinking, much importance is given to the presence of the 'other', that which is different from us, and with whom we have to live, in culture, institutions and society. The link is not tactual, or visible, and at the core, the emotional experience, inherently linked with the unconscious fantasy is not at all concrete. How can we work psychotherapeutically then?

In the group analytical relationship the links therapist to patients and the links of the patients among themselves are mainly through verbal communication, in addition to all other forms of communication. This is where work can be done, without holding onto theoretical abstractions. It is through communication that we can study the links, and apprehend the colourfulness of love, hate, knowledge search, gratitude, privileged acknowledgment etc., which characterise each link.

Even so, we must be careful about language, since there is a variety of intellectual thought in the group via the verbal expressions of each member. It has frequently been said that the words do not mean the same for everyone. 'It is more accurate to say that the words do not mean by themselves at all. Only people are able to give meaning and people do not intend the same meaning through the use of the same words'. (9)

In group communication, as well as in day-to-day life, it is very common to hear something different from what is expected, with an immediate reaction of undisposition and uncertainty. This misunderstanding can then become a case of: if this is different from what I expected, then it is against me, it is in opposition. It is easy to conceptualise this within the Kleinian theory of schizo-paranoid positions. (10)

An example of a marital interaction: husband – You started an argument because I didn't bring you a piece of dessert when I got some for myself. Wife – You didn't apologise and also said that

I leave the doors unlocked and that I don't do anything you ask me!

In this fragment, something much simpler is contained: instead of each one of those involved thinking how much they are responsible for what is going on, and how could they try to improve things, it is easier to exchange accusations, even though that only feeds the violent accusation process and the subsequent stress in the relationship.

Cultural and racial differences can be interpreted in the same way, with an end result that some minorities are being labeled as enemies, which indicates a need to avoid them. This strong prejudice then harms the daily life of the community and favours violence as well as encouraging further segregation.

Psychotherapy

We consider that psychotherapy is a treatment that occurs through psychological means and influences emotional issues as part of relationship between one or more psychotherapists with the appropriate training, and one or more motivated clients, with a setting prescribed by the therapist(s), in which there is a search for removal, modification or retardation of existing symptoms, of disturbed patterns of behavior and the promotion of mental growth for the participants. The psychotherapy can be more or less straightforward, with a variety of theoretical approaches, individual or group, always privileging the Therapeutic Encounter.

Our theoretical preference is psychoanalytical; therefore it privileges the unconscious and examines repression, resistance, transference and counter-transference. Bion is one of the authors we favour, therefore we privilege intellectual thought, personal growth, true universe in expansion, which the psychoanalytic experience is able to promote.

The psychoanalytic psychotherapies have objectives similar to those of traditional psychoanalysis, though with lesser ambition about the results, since they often of less duration and intensity. Sometimes they occur in a multi-personal form, when the work is done with families or institutions, for instance. For about fifteen years, an expression has begun to be used more frequently: the term linking psychoanalysis, which refers to the multi-personal psychoanalytic work or linking.

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Links Psychoanalysis or Linking Configuration Psychoanalysis is a way of organising knowledge which already existed and opening a study field about Psychoanalysis, whose scope includes groups in general, families, couples and institutions. It can be the basis of the study of groups with therapeutic objectives as well as non-therapeutic objectives; therefore, through a psychoanalytic comprehension of group phenomena, we will work according to the goals and objectives proposed for each group.

But how do we explain internal groups?

Individual psychology and social psychology which didactically appear separated, if examined closely, will show that only rarely and in exceptional conditions will the psychology known as individual, be in the position of ignoring the relationships of the individual with others within a social context.

‘Something else is invariably involved in the mental life of the individual, such as a model, an object, an assistant, an opponent, in such a way that, from the beginning, individual psychology, is, at the same time, also a social psychology’, as Freud once said, in 1921, (11)

It is apparent that from birth a series of characters possessing attachment and psychological importance is progressively internalised and registered – such as parents, siblings, grandparents and others – who then form an internal group, interact in this intra-subjective space and play an important role in the choices and decisions of everyday.

Couple, family, groups and institutions are configurations of inter-subjective manifestations. When we discuss inter-subjective links, we are talking about a connection at the ego and also id levels, including the fact that the individual bears within him parts which belong to someone else, in fantasy. In the intra-subjective world, the psychological contents, i.e., the unconscious fantasies have a group configuration, form an internal group and, as they configure themselves and produce mental configurations, such as the Kleinian positions, for instance.

In a linking psychoanalytical approach, we are therefore interested in the individual and his internal group, and in the group with its interpersonal communications, privileging the real external other, as the external world where group and individual are combined.

Work with Groups

The fantasy originates in the pleasure-suffering principle. From early days, the healthy baby has some knowledge and needs and a certain ability to communicate them to his mother. When the baby interacts with the world, it needs to test its fantasies in dialogue with reality. To Hanna Segal, the origin of intellectual thought can be found in the process of testing the fantasy against this reality. In other words – ‘the thought does not only contrast with fantasy, but it is based on it and is derived from it’ (6)

Bion has shown that in the mind there is a linking function which gives meaning and significance to emotional experiences – the K Link, that of knowledge. Getting to know is a creative process, it is a part of thought, a mechanism which is activated from the perception that one does not know anything. This is connected with the group psychotherapy process that facilitates learning, starting from group diversity.

These fantasies have an interesting quality which is the ability to be staged, especially in a visual modality. The staging of the conflict will be transformed in a story directed to the group and the therapist, resulting in new links, new interactions and exchange possibilities. The link is then most effective, not only in anchoring and as the basis of unique symptom specificities, but also in the possibilities for transformation, according to age, link type and implied psychopathological modes.

The subject, who is constituted in these initial links, obtains through the analytic transference a larger possibility of further change, illustrating the transformation potential of human relationships.

In contemporary times the group factor is part of our everyday world, of all the types of work with groups, therapeutic or not, and there is no lack of examples, such as support groups, operational groups, thought and analysis, brief psychotherapy, homogeneous groups for social rehabilitation of HIV+ patients, parents, pregnant women, discussion groups about customer service, and so much more. Group ways of working have entered the culture as a legitimate form of achieving personal transformation.

Conclusion

Whether psychotherapy is collective or individual, it is the psychotherapeutic attitude that is important, i.e. the attempt to

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understand the patient thoroughly and the constant search of what happens in the psychotherapist-client relationship. The psychodynamics of knowledge show that what is crucial is the quality of the emotional link which we maintain with clients, provision of the real support that they need and respect of fundamental defences.

All psychodynamic theories can be useful. They will certainly help the therapist's work. However, the major difficulties are in the area of transference/counter-transference. Since these are major factors in any psychotherapeutic treatment, in our opinion the psychotherapist must have experienced the psychoanalytic process, whether they choose or not to work psychoanalytically, since the therapist will depend on himself as the main tool in dealing with psychotic aspects of himself and his patients.

We are living in a time that prescribes solutions. Today society wants to avoid violence, anguish and conflict. If there is psychological suffering, the first idea is that there will be an anomaly in the nervous system or in the glands, an anomaly which should be eliminated.

On the other hand, the development of the psychotherapy movement shows that it can contribute to thought, even in this time of immediate results, and has a contribution in the form of the great variety of individual and group psychotherapies, including those based on psychoanalytic understanding. Although there have been biological advances, it seems necessary to recall the citation of Henri Ey: 'If psychotherapy is not always enough, at least it is always necessary'. (12).

What is necessary today, as a counterpart to the diagnostic medical model, with a purely chemical reasoning, is to attempt to integrate the advances of psychopharmacology with psychotherapeutic approaches – which may help those who increasingly, seek our help with complaints related to anxiety issues, depression, somatisation, professional failures, marriage crisis and many other complaints – always underlining the importance of the Therapeutic Encounter, Intellectual Thought, Emotional Experience and Personal Growth.

The focus of attention should not be on the individual, but in the link, which is a space, a contact point that, as a hyphen, divides and rejoins.

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Foulkes Study Day: Thoughts and Feelings ‘Second Generation Perpetrator Symptoms In Groups’

**First Commentary. Jacinta Kennedy: Small Group
Conductor (Ireland)**

Group 1

The session began with a marked resistance to naming and being named with an atmosphere of anxiety; associations to persecution were made. As individual and group identities were named along with personal narratives, resistance diminished leading to a lively dialogue about good and bad out there and in the group. The question of ethical standards being relative or absolute became a matter for reflection and disagreement. The beginning of an exploration of the good and bad within us all was risked and the ending of the group seemed untimely.

Group 2

The impact of further papers in response to the plenary lecture was evident with deep resonance to the material in relation to traumatic loss. There were some reflective silences and the group struggled again with the notion of the perpetrator within. Questions about leadership were raised, and issues about our own leader, Foulkes. Is it possible to question his attitudes and values? Was he a benign leader? As leadership became

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the issue, power relations were explored in the group. Who are the leaders and followers in here? The struggle for the leaders to stop and listen and for followers to be heard was illustrated in the group dynamic and a playful interchange about the position of the leader showed some resolution of this tension at the end of the group.

Jacinta Kennedy, Principal Clinical Psychologist and Group Analyst works in the Psychological Medicine Service, St. James' Hospital Dublin, and is a member of the training team on the Group Analytic Training course at St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin.

Second Commentary. Ray Smith: Small Group Conductor (Ireland)

Group 1

There were two empty chairs in the circle as we opened the group. I had not studied the names listed on the wall outside the group room but I knew that one of the chairs belonged to an Irish colleague. I opened the session by introducing myself. A group member suggested that it might be a good idea if people introduced themselves, which they did.

Conversation began around the topic of victim and perpetrator, the complexity of the space between the experience of perpetrator and victim and who carries which at what times. Members of the group shared many life experiences that in some way illustrated the pain of being labelled the victim or the perpetrator. The experiences were very moving and gave some insight into the crossover between perpetrator and victim.

The group opportunity enabled a sense of otherness to develop which illustrated the complexity of being viewed, by group members, as the victim or indeed the perpetrator.

Group 2

The second group began with members wondering about the empty chairs, who they were for and should they remain. It was felt that they should remain and therefore those who were expected would have a place should they arrive. One of the

more elderly members of the group recounted his early childhood experience during war times and during other difficult times. There was a respectful listening to this account and somehow the stories managed to convey the awfulness and the pain of war.

Thoughts were expressed on leadership and the types of leaders we generate in society. The concept of benign leadership was explored. This exploration took place as the room became very hot and stuffy and the glow of after-lunch sleepiness fought with the concept of benign leadership. A window was opened and awakened the spirit of the group and encouraged further exploration.

As group members experiences of and ideas on leadership were explored, the intimacy of the group allowed in elements of discontent and some disagreement. Leadership in the group and the process used were explored in the light of tradition, with a desire expressed for the holding of the traditional group analytic stance of the conductor. One was left wondering, as the session came to a close, if we could possibly bear benign leadership.

Raymond Smith is a Group Analyst working in private practice in Co. Wexford, Ireland. He is a founder member of the Irish Institute of Group Analysis, the Group Analytic Practice, Dublin and the Irish Group Analytic Society.

Third Commentary. Dimitris Moschonas, Vasiliki Karkou and Amalia Deli: IGA, Athens

We are very pleased to have the opportunity to express our thoughts and views concerning our experience during our participation in the 31st SH Foulkes Annual Lecture and Study Day in the 18th and 19th of May 2007.

The subject of the Study Day ‘Second Generation Perpetrators Symptoms in Groups’ was indeed a stimulating subject for all the participants. Despite the fact that the theme was mainly focused on the Second World War, the issue of victims and perpetrators and its effect on the following generations can serve as an opportunity for fertile discussions. It was a contemporary issue with serious social and personal implications regarding not only one’s personal history but also the wider historical context in which one was raised.

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For us, the realisation of such intense feelings concerning traumas related to our history and more specifically of the Greek Civil War and military dictatorship, triggered thoughts and discussions with friends and colleagues. We imagine that similar speculations were triggered by historical memories in Portugal.

Concerning the Study Day, although the subject stimulated intense and ‘overwhelming’ discussions, it is a pity that during the small groups we didn’t generalise on different cultures and equally serious historical events or apply the subject on our own professional experience. Given the rather heavy atmosphere in the small groups, it was during lunch breaks that we found the opportunity to express our feelings and attitudes as well as discuss the rivalries among institutes and organisations such as the Group Analytic Society.

These common concerns as well as the direct contact with the other members of the Society in the large group gave the feeling of belonging to a wider community and raised the need for more frequent contact among us, especially those coming from Mediterranean countries such as Portugal and Greece.

During the party, we had the chance to relax and communicate in a more personal manner with each other.

See you in Dublin next year!

Dimitris Moschonas, Psychiatrist, Group Analyst.
Member of the I.G.A. Athens, Staff Member of the Open
Psychotherapy Centre – Athens.
Past Director of Psychiatric Clinic 414 M.H.

Vasiliki Karkou. Psychologist-Psychotherapist, Student of
I.G.A. Athens

Amalia Del. Psychologist- Group Analyst, Member of the I.G.A.
Athens, Staff Member of the Open Psychotherapy
Centre – Athens.

Irene Bloomfield was in Prague

It was a long time ago. But something is lasting. Not only memories.

In 1993 it was the first time Irene Bloomfield came to Prague, together with Sheila Thompson and Kevin Power – to present the first group-analytic workshop. Till that time in Czechoslovakia the training in the group therapy had been flourishing already for more than two decades. Suddenly new therapeutic trends were appearing overnight – in that time of the newly established political freedom. However, what we experienced when meeting group analysis was different: suddenly we grasped new phenomena, the roots of the group life. It seemed unexpectedly interesting, it was like an intellectual thriller.

For me personally Irene seemed interesting also for one more reason (now I have to start speaking personally, otherwise my words would not be meaningful) – I thought Irene might be Jewish. I belong to the generation of so called ‘hidden children’ – those who in their childhood had to spend a certain time outside their homes and sometimes without their parents, to be saved from Nazi racial persecution (in my case hiding lasted only seven months in a rather kind protestant orphanage). We were the generation who grew up deprived of large (or even nuclear) families and we were hungry for the personalities of mothers, grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts . . . We invited Irene to come again.

Irene came again and brought with her Gaby Glassman with whom she used to work in London. Then, from 1995 those two used to come once or twice a year to give a workshop. A steady group grew, around thirty people in size, mostly therapists, social workers, physicians; the majority of us were already experienced and well trained and all of us were members of the families previously damaged by the holocaust. In spite of our previous trainings and experiences we felt that an important inner part of ours till that time had stayed untouched, hidden and longing to be found and expressed. Meeting Irene and Gaby was both a deep relief, and a sudden unburdening, a tasting of inner freedom.

Our project was able to be rooted institutionally and it was named Families After The Holocaust and belonged under the roof of the citizens' assembly which we founded in 1992 with a name Tolerance, later renamed Tolerance and Civic Society. The workshops led by Irene brought to us, first of all, a new emotional nourishment and also intellectual inspiration. This enabled us to work with our new clients: the survivors, hidden children, descendants of the previous holocaust victims; we became able – apart of treating our usual patients in our various institutions, clinics, counselling services – to face the most difficult stories, to meet the fates of the inherited traumas. We started to provide psychotherapy of holocaust trauma, individually and in groups.

Meanwhile, we were looking forward to our repeated workshops, looking forward to being with Irene, being listened to by her, hearing her small gentle voice.

In 2001 Irene passed away.

We were just preparing to celebrate our 10th workshop. Instead we were mourning. We renamed our project: the previous name Families After Holocaust was shifted to Rafael Centre, according the project of the same name that Irene had created and led in London. We wanted to continue with our workshops and Gaby Glassman kindly agreed to continue with us.

Within the next year unexpected news reached us: we were notified that Irene remembered our group in her last will. So, we decided to use this material part of her heritage to be turned into the spiritual one, too. We decided to establish the annual Prix Irene: every year the Prix Irene is granted to a person who in an original way contributed to the creation of peace among human groups. Thus Prix Irene:

- is meant to elevate and celebrate various ways of establishing peace among human groups;
- it is meant, too, to show that the Czech Jewish minority (nowadays a very tiny one) is open to the society at large, also by sharing heritages of all sorts;
- it is meant, too, to remember Irene Bloomfield's name, as she had no children of her own who otherwise would remember her name.*)

Every year when collecting and considering new candidates for Prix Irene we return anew to Irenés work and activities, to keep

in mind what she was trying to realise. Irene used her private childhood experience with antisemitism to create a broad ability to help the victims of any sort of persecution. For us she was not only an example of professional brightness but also of civic virtues; this is the combination so special to us. To stress this desirable combination every year at the occasion of the Prix Irene celebration we organise a one day public seminar. We present the results of our own work and we invite outstanding lecturers from abroad. Within the previous four years we were lucky to receive Gaby Glassman, R. Jonathan Magonet, Malcolm Pines, and Felix de Mendelssohn. Every such a lecture is an honour and inspiration to us.

Meanwhile our work in the Rafael Centre has been continuing, both in our experiential groups as well as in our patients' groups and in the individual sessions with our patients. In 2005 we decided that we should share what we had learned within the past ten years about psychotrauma treatment. Therefore we founded the Rafael Institute for training in the prevention and treatment of psychotrauma. In 2006 our institute was accredited.

This training includes a number of lectures given by outstanding individuals who contributed to the prevention of psychotrauma through their work in other professions. Thus, among our lecturers may appear a sociologist, a journalist, a priest, a rabbi, a public servant working on missions abroad, a historian . . . etc. These special lectures are open to the larger public and take place every second Sunday evening (in the venue of the Jewish museum).

I believe Irene did not leave us entirely.

Helena Klímová

* *The first laureate of Prix Irene was Kumar Vishwanathan, born in India, living in the Czech Republic; originally a teacher of physics and mathematics he became the most efficient organiser of co-existence between Roma and the Czech majority, and the widely recognized moral authority.*

The Second laureate was Jana Hradilková who organised group-help for groups of women in Chechnia and Afghanistan, usually widowed and impoverished by wars, she organised trade for their hand-products as well as food and care for their children.

The third laureate was Igor Blaževič, born in the former Yugoslavia, living in Prague, who established in Prague the yearly film festival One World.

Last year the Prix Irene was rewarded to Milena Inšová, a historian, who as a dissident and a protestant priest's wife was silenced by the communist regime

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almost all her life, yet, she succeeded in collecting sources, inspiring groups of young people and, finally, under the new freedom in her matured age, she published an important book.

This autumn the Prix Irene will be rewarded to Karel Holomek, technical college graduate and a president of the Roma association in Moravia. Under the communist regime he actively supported the dissidents, now he helps others to overcome the problems between the majority and ethnic minorities. His family history shows the tradition of cultural wisdom and the ability to overcome dependence on minority issues in favour of a general humanistic noble-mindedness.

A Practical Tool for Professionals – what is it?

For those who do not know – I am talking about group analysis.

Actually, the title of the workshop which took place in Prague (June 29–July 1) was: ‘Group Analysis: Inspiration and Practical Tool for Professionals’. And just at the beginning, to keep the attention of the reader, it is good to mention that the workshop was visited by the prominent lecturers and group leaders, namely by Anne Lindhardt, Gerda Winther and Earl Hopper.

Since the creation of the world, which means since the Czechoslovak velvet revolution, this was the second GAS London workshop to Prague. The first one took place in 1993, was inspired by Elisabeth Foulkes’ kind suggestion, and was led by Irene Bloomfield. Sheila Thompson and Kevin Power and meant the breakthrough of Group Analytic ideas into the then prevailing psychotherapeutic thinking and culture in the then existing Czechoslovakia. Since that first GAS London workshop in Prague the interest in group analysis has grown, giving birth to the first training group, then to the creation of IGA Prague – and, now, this interest has culminated in the convening of the mentioned second GAS London workshop.

The first day the workshop took place in the well known venue ‘Břehovka’ – the day clinic located in the Jewish quarters, in the mystical part of Prague and one of the most beautiful areas. On the second day the workshop, overcrowded by too many interested participants, was transferred to a more spacious venue (into a creative atmosphere of a school). There were

around 40 participants, mostly young, outspoken, authentic, well speaking English – what a difference compared to the previous times, what a relief. The workshop contained

1. large groups led by Anne Lindhardt.
2. small groups led by Gerda Winther, Earl Hopper, Marie Hošková and Petr Junek

Since I have introducing the first Czech names in this report it would be good to mention, also, the rest of the Czech group-analysts: Luděk Vrba, who did the major work to bring the workshop to life, supported by Ivana Ružičková, Helena Klímová, Václav Buriánek, Petr Junek, Karel Koblic, Ondřej Pěč and of course also by the two already mentioned colleagues.

3. the workshop also contained a number of lectures. Gerda delivered the opening speech which revealed the basic foundations necessary to open minds to an interest in group analysis. Anne provided a systematic introduction to the issue of supervision. Earl lectured on the social unconscious, speaking about theory and providing examples. For the participants the lectures were an inspiration for creativity and a joy for the intellect.

All three ways of addressing human minds and emotions (large groups, small groups, lectures) were received by the participants with keen interest and enthusiasm. The workshop inspired those individuals new to group analysis to be interested in this practical tool for professionals, in the very clever and humanistic understanding of the world outside, the human mind inside and the connections between them.

Let us have more such workshops.

Helena Klímová, Prague, July 2007
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The History of Training in Group Analysis in the Czech Republic

Ludík Vrba, Helena Klímová
(translated by Ladislav Nagy)

The Early History

In the mid 1980s, the only opportunity to get a training in group psychotherapy was provided by a system named after its founders SUR (Skála, Urban, Rube). This was a specifically Czechoslovakian version of a dynamic approach to group work, which included, as its key part, the community aspect of experience. At that time SUR had existed for fifteen years already. Besides two basic aspects (experience and in varying quantity and quality the professional aspect too) it offered in the then Czechoslovakia a truly unique experience of freedom and truth. The meeting of the communities was – as people used to say then – building ‘an island of positive deviation’. At the same time, the community system inspired one to ask for the essence of action in a human group and subsequently it provoked interest in the relation of processes happening within a small group to processes happening in society as a whole. Both these problems differ only slightly from those that are continually being solved by group analysis.

In 1986, the convention of the International Association of Group Psychotherapy took place in Zagreb and the half-open border to the then Yugoslavia allowed one to get beyond the horizon of our limited reality and beyond SUR. The trip was made by Helena Klímová who met there the practising group therapists. She discovered that group analysis tries to answer the key questions posed by group therapists: what is the relation between an individual and a group, how to understand a human group, whether the group is just a mechanical sum of individual or whether it has some new qualities that are born whenever the individuals start thinking about working together.

It was at this conference that Maria Rhode, a Munich based psychoanalyst and group analyst, offered, as the very first of our colleagues, to share her experience with group analysis in

the form of Balint groups held directly in Prague. Since then, she has arrived regularly once a year, bringing to the Czech (and later Slovak) psychotherapists the culture of group analysis.

At the very beginning it was she who, by her human and professional approach, caught the attention of the first Czech practitioners of group analysis. Then, at a traditional Group Analytic Society (GAS) workshop in London, the widow of the founder of group analysis, Mrs Elisabeth Foulkes, gave us a unique offer. As early as the autumn of 1993, three English experts arrived in Prague: Irene Bloomfield, Sheila Thomson and Kevin Power, all members of GAS London, who held in Prague the first four-day group analysis workshop, organized by H. Klímová and V. Buriánek. It was probably at this workshop that the first therapists got interested in the training and the possibility of organising such training was discussed. At this time Michael ebek came up with the idea of establishing ČSAP (Czech Society for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy) whose very structure (inspired by that of the European Federation for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, EFPP) provided a forum for group training. Eventually, an agreement was reached with Kevin Power that the training could be led by Marie-Ange Wagtman, the Danish group analyst who planned a long-term stay in Prague and who conceived the idea for such a mission when she met M. Šebek in Amsterdam in 1993.

The arrival of the first group analysts in the Czech Republic, however, did not happen solely in this direct line. Besides the fundamental change of the political climate in 1989, other initiatives worked hard to attract group analytic experts into the country. Since 1981, the Cabinet for Psychotherapy at the Psychiatry Clinic in Prague has been organizing a supervisory training program focusing on Balint groups (Jaroslav Skála, Jiří Růžička and Zdeněk Mrázek were the trainers). The trained leaders of Balint groups then organized weekend meetings of Balint groups (led mainly by J. Skála and Antonín Šimek) and, at the same time, they supervised the conducting of these groups. Maria Rhose, as the ambassador of the German Balint Society, took part in these supervisions. She applied her group-analysis sensitivity and erudition. She also provided supervision of group work and brought in some theoretical topics discussed in the seminars. As far as the Czech therapists were concerned, Václav Buriánek and Karel Koblic were the main contributors.

The seminars were organized by the Psychotherapist Centre in Břehová street. Gradually, the Western ambassadors were joined by Erica Jones from London who then, together with Maria Rhode, served as supervisors of the mission of the Czech leaders of Balint groups in Slovakia (Koblic, Buriánek, Růžička).

Later, in 1995, a big weekend seminar was held in Bøehová street by IGA Copenhagen. The seminar consisted of workshops, lectures and examples of supervisory work. About 40 colleagues took part in the seminar. Other colleagues (Petr Junek, Karel Koblic) went for inspiration to the 10th European Conference of Group Analysis in Copenhagen (1996).

Contemporary History

In the spring 1994 Marie-Ange Wagtmann (the training therapist of the Institute of Group Analysis, IGA, in Copenhagen) made an agreement with ČSPAP, represented by Michael Šebek. This agreement allowed us to launch a proper training group in the Czech Republic working on group analytic principles. At that time Marie-Ange Wangtmann, as has been already said, was about to stay for a longer period in Prague and she could thus promise to lead the experiential group for three years. Michael Šebek, together with Václav Buriánek, approached nine more colleagues, inviting us to join. Seven of us accepted.

In the autumn 1994 the group of nine members started the programme – there were two sessions (each 90 minutes) every fortnight. The sessions were communicated in a foreign language, i.e. a language of which none of us, including the lecturer, was a native speaker. The impact this had on the training could be a topic for separate reflection. None of us was a real beginner in psychotherapy as we all had some experience with group therapy (mostly often in the SUR system), most of us had led some training group in the past (in ČSPAP or other training institutions). We all were either psychoanalysts or candidates of the Psychoanalytic Institute in Prague. But we had little familiarity with group analysis at all or had only limited and fragmentary experience.

After three years of such experience, containing many emotional and intellectual perceptions and impressions, it was evident that for the majority of the trainees group analysis was very

inspiring and enriching. We were on our way to achieving a professional identification.

At the same time the framework of the training defined its features and boundaries and decisions had to be made about whether the training would be complete, fully guaranteed by IGA Copenhagen or not. What was necessary, among other things, was to accept conditions required by the training institution, namely theoretical education and supervisions. During multiple meetings with the training team of IGA Copenhagen, the standpoints were made clear. We asked for modification of the training conditions (due to different development and the conditions in our country with many obstacles to overcome), our lecturers were unwilling to mitigate the highly demanding requirements applied to all European candidates in group analysis.

We believe these negotiations proved to be a great inspiration for both parties, albeit perhaps better for us. The trust of the IGA lecturers in us grew as they saw that we were determined to ‘go for it’ with these demanding (and therefore highly valuable) lecturers. The resulting agreement could be nothing else than a compromise. The requirements stayed the same but the means to achieve this goal became more flexible. Naturally, there was differentiation within our group too. Two of our colleagues deemed their experience sufficient and decided not to advance into the theoretical and supervisory part.

The supervisory part of the training combined, as had been agreed previously, the direct supervision of our work by Anne Lindhardt and Thor Friis on mutual visits and the so called inter-vision group – where we submitted the results of our work with the groups. In theory all the work was transferred into our competence: we organized seminars in which we discussed more or less designated topics. Some of these topics were then subsequently used in our lectures for the ČSPAP candidates.

The training culminated in the submission of an essay – of the scope normally required for submitting to a professional journal. The essay contained both practice with the group and group analytic theory, evaluated in IGA Copenhagen. We welcomed the idea that the training could be completed by presenting group analysis for a general public – thus the first Conference on Group Analysis was held in Prague in April 2001, with the participation of professionals from IGA Copenhagen and

major representatives of group analysis from the whole Europe. On completion of the training program we were given authorization by our Danish colleagues to establish a group analytic institute in the Czech Republic.

Besides the group of seven members (Marie Hošková, Helena Klímová, Ivana Růžičková, Václav Buriánek, Petr Junek, Karel Koblic, Luděk Vrba) some other colleagues underwent the experiential part of the training in a group with Marie-Ange Wagtman. Their situation was more difficult as they had less time to use visits of IGA experts for their supervision. Out of them, Ondřej Pěč has finished his training so far and has thus become the eight member of IGA Prague.

The present

Group analysis, as I have pointed out, strives to understand and to interrelate individual experience, the experience of a small human groups and experience of large groups. In the early 1990s H. Klímová and Michael Šebek invited Pamela Pomerance-Steiner of Cambridge, a colleague of Patrick de Maré, and Stephania Beukema to lead the first large group in the Czech Republic. Another large group was then called by Klímová and Buriánek. In Moravia, large groups are convened by Ladislav Grygar.

The wider framework of group analytic thinking includes the working group 'Families after the Holocaust' (therapy focused on holocaust traumas), founded within ČSPAP by Helena Klímová (organizationally this project was developed by the citizens' assembly Tolerance and Civil Society). Since 1995 this group held once or twice a year workshops led by the British therapists Irene Bloomfield and Gaby Glassman. When Irene Bloomfield passed away, the project was renamed as Rafael Centre (such was the name of the centre Irene Bloomfield founded and managed in London). In 2006, the therapists of this group established the training facility called Rafael Institute.

ČSPAP group section provides trainings led by the Czech group analysts. So far, 25 colleagues are in training in 4 self-experience and 2 supervisory groups. In 2004, the Czech Institute of Group Analysis (IGA Prague) was founded. The Institute is a member of European Group-Analytic Training Institutes

Network and is responsible for group analytic training in our country.

Conclusion

This article is an attempt to summarize the history of the group analysis in the Czech Republic up to the present time. We are happy to say that in the Czech Republic there are many colleagues who are in favour of group analytic thinking. We believe the group experience creates an opportunity to develop group analytic culture and thinking in the ranks of new therapists.

Summary

The article illustrates the prehistory and history of the introduction of group analysis to Czechia. Special interest is dedicated to the personal contacts with the first group analytic professionals in the last decades of the last century. The article introduces activities which were parallel to group analytic thinking (especially Balint groups and supervision activities) which occurred in Czechoslovakia at the end of the last century, also. The history of regular group analytic training of the Czech participants with IGA Copenhagen is presented. The present state is described (foundation of IGA Prague etc.)

About the authors

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Mgr. Helena Klímová is a group analyst, psychotherapist and publisher, training and supervisory therapist, a member of ČSPAP, IGA Prague, GAS London (honorary member). She provides psychotherapy in her private practice and in the Rafael Centre – the project which focuses on the holocaust trauma. She is a member of the editorial board of the monthly journal Psychologie Dnes (Psychology Today).

The authors wish to thank their colleagues V. Buriánek, P. Junek, K. Kobic and M. Šebek for information and advice.

Cultural Differences in Groups – a bridge towards connecting similarities and the risk of differences

Culture is a more or less consistent set of thoughts and actions, but within each culture characteristic goals are created which are not shared with other cultures. This leads to variations in the personal motivations of actors within these cultures, their methods of achieving goals and their expression of personal needs. The turbulences in this process give rise to permanent conflicts which may grow more serious, but may also have a tendency to neutralise and find synthesis, aided by the libidinous urge to connect.

In this context we could observe relationships between cultures of different ethnic groups resulting from many intertwined threads. These are complex processes which grow and have different histories in the group in which they originate. In a large group (EGATIN) they are connected with constant feelings of similarity shared with many characteristics of other groups. This phenomena may be used as a possibility of bridging the barriers arising from the problem of sharing essential characteristic with the other, but it may also constitute a risk – but the group may provide the possibility of observing the existence of a conscious identity within group functioning, not only as an idealized image of a mother, but as a space which absorbs good images of the Self. This may form a way of integrating basic feelings of the sameness of individuals, and also the group as a whole. Let us remember that Freud talked about a group in ‘Group Psychology and the Ego’ in 1921. ‘Each person is an integral part of numerous groups, ties of identification connect him in many directions, and he has built his Ego ideal according to very different models. Therefore each individual shares numerous group psyches originating in his race, class, herd, nationality, etc., and he can rise

above them to the extent to which he possesses a shred of independence and originality’.

The existence of EGATIN as a large group for more than 20 years indicates that the members of this institution have developed a complexity of functioning in a large group that is active at a great number of different levels integrated to different extents. Such levels illustrate the dynamics within group members from different cultures or of different nationalities, each with their own specific characteristics. In accordance with this, we can see the members of this group as representatives of different cultural values communicated with one another and how they master the possibility of harmonising their differences through tolerance; this shows us that it is possible, through respecting cultural and civilization differences, to maintain the control of our own negative aspects, and respect the positive things in others without destroying the balance of good and evil, love and hatred.

It is certain that over time our ethical and aesthetic requirements change, which is then reflected also in our cultural framework. This awakens intellectual curiosity, striving then towards knowledge of others and accepting differences, thus enriching the connection with reality by attaining those patterns that contribute to a higher quality of personal life. To achieve this it is necessary that the environment in which the group functions should have certain qualities in order for the process of maturation of an individual to become part of the group or the environment where he or she functions. In other words, if the environment is good, then the individual who has become a member of the group is provided with the opportunity to grow, in line with the potential developed in that group. This is a testimony to the complexity of the human psyche, whose activity differs when in the group or alone. However, both functions are accorded a certain level of autonomy despite the fact that between them exist a necessary osmosis, interdependence and integration. Thus it may be supposed that there exists a kind of border, a kind of semi-permeable membrane which could to a certain extent hold the two observed areas, the group and the individual. There is an impression that in EGATIN each individual has achieved integration so they can work constructively on the homogenization process of the group. The feeling of freedom and tolerance for one another make the borders fluid and enable the flow of realistic opinions and feelings for the others.

That is why every meeting of EGATIN is invaluable for me, because then once again I find the purpose and meaning of the existence of the group in which I belong. I have a need for a more intensive communication with the members of EGATIN in order to keep connection with the integrity of this group as much as possible.

The latest meeting of EGATIN was in Budapest after a gap of 12 years, where I participated for the first time as an observer, at the time I was accepted as a member. I remember my fascination with the meeting, which was organised by Piroška, and it was brilliantly done 12 years ago, as it is brilliantly accomplished now. Moreover, Budapest is my favourite city which stirs in me my own personal feelings of transgenerational transfer of memory, handed down to me by my ancestors, who often came to Budapest themselves, which only serves to strengthen my conviction that transgenerational transfer is important. It taught me, they taught me, to appreciate the culture of others, to take from it the things that make my world richer and thus to feel like a citizen of the world, with my culture and also with the culture of others, which has become a part of my own culture through generations. Numerous generations passed this culture on to me and an awareness that each individual participates in numerous group psyches stemming from his nationality, but also from the nationalities of the other, and that by integrating them we can arrive at our own portion of independence and originality.

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Call for Interest Group

Dear Readers of Contexts,

I'm wondering if others are interested in forming a discussion group (special interest group) on the theme of 'Living with Abilities and Disabilities', using emails, letters, and eventually perhaps meeting in person too.

Some of us have acquired (or have life-long) differences (physical changes, disabilities, handicaps is the more common word in the UK I believe) that definitely introduce challenges of many sorts to our communications and relationships, and also to our group interactions. The non-physical aspects, the psychological and societal dynamics, are of major importance, not only for us, yet also for others with whom we live and work.

Life with perceptual, mobility, and learning changes (not preventing continued careers and avocations) is something our circles in group analysis have not addressed, as far as I am aware. These sorts of changes shape all subsequent interpersonal encounters, and in many cases, introduce disruptions to long-established patterns.

The idea would be to recruit interest from ‘normal’ (!) people too. There are always reverberating reactions among all others in our lives. For example, a hearing loss as one example, often renders the other person unable to respond, an inability to hear our needs.

My courage for proposing this (coming out, so to speak) is in part due to an Internet listserv for UK Medical Professionals with Hearing Loss (many physicians, nurses, therapists). That has been a support group for me. It’s now time to bring this topic into other professional circles, and the GAS seems a good place.

We might also contribute to overlapping concerns of inclusion, group dialogue, social justice, and new ideas for group analytic applications too

If you are interested, or with any questions, please email to Lauren@caregiving-online.com.

Lauren Storck

Interface Groups for patients suffering from dermatological disturbances – adhesion strategy for therapeutic group analysis

I – Theoretical Framework

As generally agreed, psychosomatic patients, in sharp contrast with the neurotic, encounter great difficulty in identifying and describing affect. The overwhelming poverty of their phantasy lives results in a particular style of thinking, functional in the utilitarian sense and outward facing. Not only is this characterised by operational thinking but also a tendency to act in ways designed to avoid conflict generating situations.

These patients have not obtained major benefits from classical therapeutic approaches that frequently provoke counter-transference reactions such as boredom, frustration and interpretive blockages. According to the work of Bion, white relationships, devitalisation, the reductionist aspect and the specifics of these subjects results in the need to locate the failing in the thought apparatus of these patients.

McDougall (1991) proposed the term normopathy to characterise the high level of adaptation and social conformity of these individuals. Despite being profoundly perturbed, they do not display psychotic or neurotic symptoms. This pseudo-normality can be compared with Winnicott's false-self concept made up of 'a desperate attempt to psychically survive in the world of others but without attaining a sufficient understanding of the emotional ties, signals and symbols that render human relationships significant'.

In early writings in the field of Psychosomatic Dermatology, in 1867 Erasmus Wilson described the nerve influence on the skin through symptoms such as irritation, alopecia and parasitophobia.

Other dermatologists of this period also expressed interest in this field. In 1868, Damon published 'Cutaneous Neuroses' followed by Block in 1891, who provided the term neurodermite. In 1895, Kaposi wrote on neuroses of the skin.

With Psychoanalysis came a broad range of studies in this field of which we would highlight the work of Spitz (1977) who related initial perturbation in the mother-child relationship as a causal factor in Atopic Dermatitis.

Despite the range of other publications detailing symptoms of subconscious conflicts emerging in the skin, only more recently, and as from the 1980s, did the interest of dermatologists refocus on the psychic/body relationship.

Recent studies show that significant losses such as unemployment, poor interpersonal adjustment, anxiety concerns, hostility or low self-esteem are related to dermatological conditions.

According to authors such as Hautmann and Panconesi (1997), stress impacts at not only the psychological level but also the biological or social levels and may overcome defence systems and precipitate or perpetuate diseases.

The connection between neurological and psychological aspects has been progressively proven through studies of immunological mechanisms that are increasingly approached through levels of stress.

The actual embryologic origin, shared by the skin and central nervous system is sufficient ground to assume that what takes place in one system may generate consequences in the other.

As regards clinical practice, Bergeret stated that psychosomatic symptoms are stupid as they did not seek to express any emotion and are stripped of any apparent sense.

Symbolic negativity, operational thinking, oneiric scarce and the absence of fantasy stands as the sphinxes guarding over any deciphering of the psychosomatic enigma.

Hence, the analyst needs to nominate sentiments, foster the verbalisation of fantasies and affection serving as a model capable of developing the capacity to think.

The individual under analysis should have the power for self-expression both with others and the analyst in order to be able to ensure regulation of emotional activities.

Peter Kutter referred how 'primary initial therapy' might be advantageous similar to the intent of A. Janov (1975) or the 'opening phase therapy' of P. Geerling 1975 to bring about an abreaction, at the least cathartic, of part of the entrapped affection.

Amaral Dias (1992) identified the need for a specific therapeutic attitude.

Hence, there seems to be general consensus around the justification for a change in analytical technique.

In 1999, Maria Rita Mendes Leal went so far as to question whether: ‘... certain psychosomatic patients, who lack any ‘internal object’, are not able to establish an intimate framework for experiences of confusion in interpersonal relationships and silently demand total investment – but who are unable to accept it . . . Would we ever be able to achieve it?’.

It is clear that the psychosomatic patient finds it difficult to accept proposals and processes of analytical therapy.

In our clinical practice, it seems equally clear that the effort of these patients in maintaining the cleavage between body and mind with complaints centred either on the somatic dimension or on the interpersonal level, as revealed by symptoms on the body-skin.

In turn, and from the dermatological perspective, it is increasingly common to refer such psychosomatic patients for psychotherapeutic treatment. However, as is generally accepted, very few ever actually get to the analyst and still fewer ever accept any proposal of psychotherapy/analysis.

It would thus seem consensual, and from the perspectives of both dermatologists and analysts that there is a need for a common approach that enables such eternal resistance to be overcome and achieve acceptance that the body and the psyche as a whole.

II – Working proposal

In response to this problem, we propose setting up patient groups for those experiencing dermatological pathologies but in the presence of specialists from both clinical fields. These groups are to serve as an interface between somatic and psychic complaints.

These groups are to be run by a group-analyst and with co-therapy provided by a dermatologist and work as recognition groups for psychic aetiology and to this end as a transitive object for group-analysis/psychoanalysis.

The dermatologist as a representative of the body and the group-analyst as a representative of the mind, even while formally differentiated, emerge as an object of unified identification thereby fostering a containing function. It is the responsibility of

the analyst to nominate the feelings, encourage the verbalisation of fantasies and affections promoting the capacity for thought in the sense defined by Bion. This thus opens up, via mental functions, a new means of communication between the conscious-subconscious in which there may prove to be an affective commitment tied to emotions and thereby altering the ‘shunt’ effect of the somatic and an alternative to the operational thinking so common to these patients.

In these groups, the analysts should avoid any kind of transference interpretation taking on only a containing function, empathic and respectful of the physical symptoms.

Hence, the insight capacity is encouraged with the need to carry out self-questioning. This necessary condition for group-analysis groups provides the grounds for building up a transference relationship, in turn a necessary construction for rebuilding pathogenic relationships.

These co-therapy groups would appear to be a possible instrument able to facilitate access to analytical treatment for a significant population of psychosomatic patients.

It further represents a challenge for the group-analyst and the dermatologist while also bringing about new therapeutic approaches and thus enriching both fields of scientific knowledge.

With the overriding objective of getting a greater percentage of these patients to sign up to group-analysis, such groups may also serve, as they proceed along their itinerary, intermediary therapeutic purposes including: establishing positive body-psyche co-habitation experiences, that is links/cooperation between dermatologists and group-analysts, raising the insight capacity, facilitating the inter-personal relationships and fostering the training of the ego in action. This thus assists in the emergence of levels of individual/multiple subjective experience and what Cortesão defined as associative communication.

Our proposal points to groups undertaking a weekly session attended by no more than six patients and lasting an hour and fifteen minutes. Such groups may be extended to other pathologies of a psychosomatic nature.

Control groups further need to be set up in order to evaluate:

The effectiveness of these groups in achieving their objectives, that is, the patients actually undertaking group-analysis,

The effectiveness of these groups as regards their intermediate therapeutic purposes, that is, participation in joint therapeutic cooperation programs (dermatologist/group-analyst).

These psychosomatic patient interface groups may generate further developments such as the adherence to courses of prescribed medication or undertaking other psycho-therapeutic approaches, etc.

Such joint groups would open up a series of ideas that would be reflected upon and developed during the course of the work itself.

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CULTURE

How is Woody Allen going?

SCOOP: One more piece in the endless analysis of this gorgeous film director. Firstly I should say I am not an expert. I like some films and also some directors, like Woody Allen. I look at his films through my psychoanalytic and group analytic identity. I feel that the films directed by him have supreme moments which promptly make us understand why and how does analysis cure.

In his most recent film ‘Scoop’, Woody Allen speaks about the very difficult feeling – the knowledge of our own end. According to Kohut, the ability to tolerate facing our own death is one of the narcissistic transformations. Just a few of us can achieve this stage.

Woody Allen tells us about getting old, possessing an old body. Despite this Woody Allen asserts that he still has much to say, to teach, and to give to the younger generations; he could even

protect them. He became the ‘father’ of the journalist who was advised by another old man – who had just died (beside the vigour, the beauty) because of a crime. The young lady was helped to be a good professional by these two old men.

In the beginning Woody Allen refused this parental function. But he quickly adapted himself to the new role he was assigned and, in spite of his habits, he took the risk: ‘At this age, I only have one ambition: to eat my dinner without getting sick’ Moreover, he took the additional risk of becoming emotionally involved and thereby finding something new in his life. He was able to do this once more not because of his own desire but by someone else’s desire. It is interesting when Woody Allen talks about the old prejudices, the old habits (he still take pills), the old hates and conflicts (the English, the aristocracy); nevertheless he doesn’t speak about therapy this time, as far as I noticed.

‘I will never come to live in UK because of the language barrier’

‘I will never become at ease driving on the opposite side’

And, once again, he tells us that the past still models our lives, from childhood to death, suggesting that the difficulties we cannot transform during our life are deleterious. In this film, whilst risking change, the creation of a new man, he dies because he was anxious, as usual, and got confused about driving on the ‘opposite side’ and crashed. Nevertheless his ‘adopted daughter’ could protect herself without him. He had been protecting her, trying to show her how competent that handsome, elegant, aristocrat man, could be.

I would like to say that I have always found the actors chosen by Woody Allen to be rather uninteresting, physically speaking. However, in this film the only beautiful person is the assassin, an aristocrat. Is this a conscious prejudice of Woody Allen? Or is it an unconscious one? Or is it just a different taste? I would like so much to ask him about it. And what about you?

I like Woody Allen, his gorgeous sense of humour and his never ending submission to illness, but he never gives up. In ‘Scoop’, when he dies and travels in the boat of death he tries to continue his profession with his death colleagues.

Isaura Neto, Lisbon

IGA/GAS Library Update

The first update is to note the change to the librarian's hours of work: by mutual agreement I now work one long day per week, rather than two standard days, and am thus present on Wednesday, from 08.00–17.30. This does mean that if I need to engage in dialogue with members in respect of queries, and I do not get a response to enable me to act, the issue will be held over to the next week. In this context, it would be most helpful if members could spell out their needs: e.g. – do you just want a citation checking, or do you want a copy of the item? Do you want a photocopy/loan item posted to you, or will you collect from the Library?

To assist this process of clarification, I have developed two new, online pro formas: for request of photocopies from journals/books, incorporating the copyright declaration, and a literature search request form. Both of these can be emailed to you on request, and I would suggest that if you think you might ever be likely to use either service, you email me and ask for copies of the forms, to have available when you need them.

Please note, however, that while I am happy to receive copy requests via the form, I do need to have a signed, hard-copy of the form, for each separate copy requested, in order to comply with copyright legislation. This is one case where an electronic version will not do!

The literature search request form is designed to enable you to tell me as much as you can about what you want: the general concept of the search: what you are looking for, what you are hoping to find, what you think might exist, etc.; specific keywords and search terms, and combinations thereof, e.g. 'x' AND 'y' for terms to be searched in combination; 'x' OR 'y' for synonymous terms, or 'x' NOT 'y', where you want to exclude the latter concept: (standard Boolean searching, in fact). Optional search parameters can be included, such as limiting the date range (although I have noticed that the concept of group analysis does not seem to deal much in currency: articles from early issues of *Group Analysis* are requested quite as much as more recent ones). However where material is likely to be abundant,

limiting the date range can produce a manageable set of data. It is important for me to know the urgency of your search, in light of my part-time working, so I have included on the form a box to indicate the time-span in which you want the results, as well as one to say how you want them delivered (the default will be an email attached word document file). I have also included three questions to help me gain information about your needs, and about the level of access to other information resources which you have: i.e. other libraries to which you have access, and other databases which you can access and use. The third and final question only comes into play with your second search request, and is a request for feedback on how satisfactory the previous search was, so I can establish whether I am fulfilling your needs.

As for other news: the library committee is looking into new storage, and the Librarian is working on refining the specification for making the library databases fully accessible to members, enabling you to search, identify what the library holds, request loans, and enabling me to provide much fuller data about the content of library items, with abstracts for all content although this last will take time, but even uploading basic bibliographical data of library holdings will make them much more visible to members.

Finally, as a reminder, a basic outline of library services and how they operate was included in my Library report in the last issue of *Context*.

Please do contact me by telephone [Wednesday] or by email: elizabeth@igalondon.org.uk at any time, if you have any queries.

E M Nokes
IGA/GAS Library
1 Daleham Gardens
London NW3 5BY
Tel 020 7431 2693
Fax 020 7431 7246

Librarian available at the following times:
Tuesday 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.
Wednesday 8.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

GAS FORUM

The GAS Forum

Is it sinking into the 21st century pit of BLOGS?

The reason why I was strongly motivated to launch the Forum originated with the thought, which Dick Blackwell recently quoted about history.

‘I think it was AJP Taylor who said, ‘The only lesson of history is that no-one ever learns anything from it.’

Terry Birchmore referring to Ronald Sandison’s book ‘A Century of Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Group Analysis’ and my meetings with Ronnie Sandison over the past year followed this.

I spent many years studying, teaching and consulting in organisation behaviour because I felt driven to make my experience of psychoanalysis and group analysis operationally relevant in what Foulkes described as ‘open air psychiatry’.

The first and constant occurring shock of working at the upper echelons of multi-national organisations was to observe disassociation as a predominant behavioural norm. In fact, it was because of the dominance of this feature in my working life, that when I retired, I vowed to stay in touch with the body of knowledge from which my own foundations were formed and after 25 years in the ‘wilderness’ I decided to invest energy in to the GAS. (The prodigal son syndrome!).

I along with Ronald Sandison, many of the 60–70’s generation such as Max Jones with his charismatic leadership in therapeutic communities: Ronnie Laing with his bizarre threshold challenging treatments of schizophrenia, could not avoid the drama being practised in those years.

The sanity I finally experienced having visited and worked at many ‘meccas’ of different methods, including the Californian pioneers at Atrascadero State Prison and Fritz Perls at Esalen, emerged from the visits I spent learning from and absorbing the wisdom of Michael Foulkes.

He was the ‘voice of kind intelligent reason’ amongst the cacophony of so-called schools of psychotherapy.

This is not to condemn them all because I learned a great deal which I used in organisations, especially from the systems oriented thinkers at the Tavistock with whom I also spent considerable time.

What astounds me and seems to have the same effect on colleagues of my generation, is what Dick Blackwell found through AJP Taylor.

I have spent the last three years re-immersed in the psychotherapeutic milieu and cannot honestly say there has been any groundbreaking discoveries of the same impact Foulkes described.

My optimism, (one of my perennial features) keeps telling me that somewhere the powerful influence of group dynamics knowledge is being exercised.

The GAS Forum will gradually begin to attract reports of these applications and we will all benefit further in our lives from the insight we gain.

I cannot deny that I have felt quite sad because of the very slow pace of ‘progress’ around the Forum as a medium to promote more clarity and learning.

Maybe that is to do with the fact that in the earlier epoch of our human discoveries, the great exponents of fresh human insights were the groundbreakers after whom there has only followed a litany of repetitive reinvention.

GAS seems to have attracted some ‘new generation’ of what I call more scientific minded members.

It was obvious with our pioneer thinkers, such as Eric Ericson, Abe Maslow et al, that we could use inductive logic to explain their discoveries.

I have been following contemporary literature over the past three years, apart from reading either clanging repeats or subtler tingling repeats, and think GAS has a great challenge ahead: providing reality based statistically validated evidence that group analytical practice achieves results against measurable objectives.

If we are not careful, the Forum will be no different from any other Blog and GAS will become invisible in the 95% vacuous, dummed down exchanges currently pervading the web.

It is very encouraging to see some intelligent, humorous contributions on the Forum. I am eagerly waiting to see more of the same.

Trevor Mumby

NOTICES

IGA/GAS Film Group

21st September 2007: Wah Wah

Grant's childhood at the end of the British Empire in Swaziland. is the basis of *Wah-Wah*, a film written, directed, and produced by Grant. The film juxtaposes themes of alcoholism with post colonial anxiety to create a moving and heartfelt picture. Told through the eyes of Ralph Compton (Nicholas Hoult), the film is essentially a tale of a dysfunctional set of characters. Starting with the breakdown of his parent's marriage, Ralph has to come to terms with his father's alcoholism and subsequent remarriage, adolescence and the impending independence of his native Swaziland.

The film will be discussed by Richard E. Grant, writer and director of this film.

19th October 2007. The Lives of Others

East Berlin, November 1984. Five years before its downfall the GDR seeks to maintain its power with the help of a merciless system of control and observation. When Oberstleutnant Anton Grubitz puts loyal Stasi-Hauptmann Gerd Wiesler on to the famous writer Georg Dreyman and his girlfriend Christa Maria Sieland who is a famous actress herself, he expects career advancement for himself. What Wiesler did not expect was that the intimate view on the world of the ones he's observing changes the snitch as well. Looking at 'the life of the others' makes him aware of the beggarliness in his own life and enables access to a so far unknown world of love, free thinking and speaking he is hardly able to elude. But the system can't be stopped anymore and a dangerous game, which destroys the love of Christa Maria Sieland and Georg Dreyman and Wiesler's present existence begins.

Discussion led by Jason Maratos.

16th November 2007. Red Road.

A taut thriller in which a woman stalks a man whose past sin is only made clear at the end of the film. Jackie works as a monitor of video surveillance cameras placed strategically around Glasgow. She watches people all day, for security. She lives alone and carries an aura of a disturbing, possibly tragic past. Her only seeming recreation comes in occasional loveless fornication with a married man.

One day she sees a man on her monitor she never expected to see again. She learns he has been released from prison early for good behaviour. You suspect the reason for his incarceration is connected to Jackie's past.

Discussion led by Dr. Estela Welldon.

To book for the above events contact: Lucy Messer, General Administrator, Institute of Group Analysis, 020 7431 2693.

14th European Symposium in Group Analysis

The Group-Analytic Society, London, in co-operation with the Irish Group Analytic Society supported by the Irish Institute of Group Analysis is pleased to announce the 14th European Symposium in Group Analysis.

Despair Dialogue and Desire: the transformative power of the analytic group in the movement from despair to desire through dialogue.

Dublin, Ireland. August 18th–22nd 2008

The Symposium will continue the traditional triennial event of the Group Analytic Society, London. This event creates the opportunity, once more, for us to come together to share our work and to learn from one another. This learning dialogue is a unique way of gathering together and is the essence of our work, the telling and hearing of one another's stories. The

Group Analytic Community in Ireland are proud to host this special event.

Conference Website: www.dublin-gas-symposium.com

Liz O'Connor
Chairperson
Local Organizing Committee

EATGA–AEATA
European Association of Trans-cultural
Group-analysis

WORKSHOP
THE TRANSCULTURAL GROUP
BEYOND BELONGING

Marsala (Sicily) 22–25 May 2008

Aim of the Workshop

EATGA–AEATG periodically organises international experiential workshops based on the idea that cultural similarities and differences are areas to research and investigate in the group setting.

People participating to these workshops usually come from different countries in the world, their aim is to make experience of a context in which the focal characteristic is to meet different cultural worlds, belongings and identities made of different languages, stories, values and faiths, costumes, education and religions.

The aim of EATGA–AEATG is to develop comprehension and research on the cultural origins (matrices) of identity and self,

Through dialogue, knowing and meeting which is offered by the groups' experience; this happens through the use of analysis by small and large groups.

Each workshop tries to capture specific aspects of these interesting themes and every workshop is organized in a different place with a particular geographic, historical and cultural character.

The workshop proposed for 2008 wants to explore the theme of the ‘transcultural group’ as experience that allows to reach a symbolic intersubjective space which goes beyond the characteristics of the groups to which one belongs and with which one identifies.

This will be done through the use of analytical groups accompanied by psychodramatic moments.

This potential space, following this proposal, develops toward two directions:

On one side it is a place in which should be possible to recognize the conflictualities that sedimentated in the historical and ideological events which made so that the belonging groups could define themselves in contrast or open opposition to other groups (dominating/dominated, aggressors/victims, conflict between ideological and religious belonging, north/south, east/west, local/global, etc.) so to give the chance to start a process of reconciliation.

On the other side, through the experimentation of a new space, potentially not part of a specific belonging or cultural identity, it could make possible to begin to use a language and a medium of communication which could be transversal to the personal belonging (like the artistic symbol poiesis). The workshop could so give birth to the possibility to know ourselves in a renewed cultural matrix which is born from the meeting and from the creative and rebirthing connection of belongings and previous identities.

The workshop will be organized alternating work with rather small groups (from 12 to 15 participants) with work with larger groups including all the participants.

The staff of group analysts is international.

The workshop is supposed to start in the afternoon of Thursday and finish in the morning of Sunday.

The details of the program will be ready toward the end of 2007.

The choice of the town of Marsala is due to her geographical position and to the history which derives from its location.

She is on the south-western coast of Sicily, in the centre of the Mediterranean sea, place of landing and passage between South and North of this part of the world and between western world and Arab, African and Asiatic worlds.

In front of Marsala there is the small island Mozia, which years ago could be reached walking on a path 50 cm. under water and which witnesses the local Phoenician culture.

Few miles away there are the three big Egad islands. They were the historical scenery of the ‘Punic’ wars which decided the Romans’ hegemony in the entire Mediterranean basin and the shores where happened the Saracen sea raids and which are still now strongly reminded by the local popular traditions.

Sicily has always been and still now is a space where dominations and cultures coming from many different parts: Greeks, Arabs, Normans, Spanish, Borbonic, etc. could in different times meet in a less or more conflictual way.

English people had too a strong and important role in Sicily, as many know, especially in Marsala own to the valorisation of the enological richness known with the same name of the town.

The name of Marsala is interesting: in Arab language ‘marsa’ (beach, shore) and Ali (name of an Arab conqueror, and not ‘Allah’ as would be easier to think).

Last but not less important has been her role in the unification of Italy that started with the arrival in this town of the Thousands of Garibaldi so that in this town there is a museum dedicated to these events.

Another interesting aspect of the town is the fact that she has a small and very nice and peaceful historical centre. In her inside there are very beautiful buildings very well restored and in which there are public and cultural places and very good hotels with not expensive prices.

These spaces are perfectly suitable to the workshop activity and to the development of the work.

There is also a very interesting touristic and cultural surrounding not only in Marsala but also in the territory around.

Every person coming for the workshop should stay some time in order to enjoy it.

Probably it will be possible to organize some cultural or touristic event in the day of the workshop.

The participation quote will be of €200.

In order to get more information you can write to:
Giuseppe Ruvolo: g.ruvolo@unipa.it

THE GROUP-ANALYTIC SOCIETY (LONDON)

The Jane Abercrombie Prize 2008

This award was established in 1984 following Jane Abercrombie's death. At that time donations were made to establish a Fund to award a monetary prize every three years at the Triennial European Symposium to an individual or a number of individuals who had undertaken noteworthy work together in applying group-analysis in education, which was Jane Abercrombie's speciality. For the purposes of the award the term 'education' is broadly interpreted.

All Society members and others who work in group-analysis are encouraged to submit details of work which they consider suitable for the award of the prize.

It may be presented on paper, video, DVD, art form or a combination of all of these media. Interested persons should apply directly to the President at the Society's address. Entries for consideration should be with the President by Friday 16th May, 2008. The Prize will be a cheque to the value of £1000 Sterling. It will be announced and awarded at the Dublin Symposium August 2008.

Please contact me if you wish to discuss a potential entry, or to recommend that the work of another person should be considered.

Kevin Power
Honorary Treasurer
(contact details on inside front cover of this publication)

Invitation for Donations

The Group Analytic Society, Registered UK Charity Number 281387, invites donations from members and others in any amount for its General Fund.

Donations demonstrate a belief that Group Analysis contributes to local and international communications and relations. Donations may also be given ‘in memory’ or ‘in recognition’ of a person in our community or elsewhere.

Future discussions may identify a new fund for the Social Application of GA in the modern world. Members and others may discuss donations with any member of the GAS Management Committee, email drstorck@caregiving-online.com, or contact the Society via email to groupanalytic.society@virgin.net. Tax considerations will be based on legal requirements in the donor’s region.

Submitted by Lauren E. Storck, MC Member

CONFERENCE ACCOMMODATION IN LONDON

Visitors attending events held at 1 Daleham Gardens, London NW3 5BY might find it convenient to stay nearby, i.e. in Hampstead or Belsize Park. London hotels need to be booked well in advance and by credit card.

Hotels (at between £60 & £95 per person per night)

The Swiss Cottage Hotel at 4 Adamson Road, London NW3, has been well recommended by members who have stayed there in the past. *They offer us a special rate of £60 for a single room: when booking, ask for Alex and say that you are a Group-Analytic Society member.*

(Swiss Cottage Hotel, Tel. 0207 722 2281)

Dawson's House at 72 Canfield Gardens, London NW6, is a small, rather basic hotel at the cheaper end of the local price range. It is situated, two minutes from Finchley Road Tube Station and 15 minutes walk from Daleham Gardens.
(Dawson's House Hotel, Tel. 0207 624 0079)

The House Hotel at 2 Rosslyn Hill, London NW3 1PH is a more pricey, but rather nicer place less than five minutes from Daleham Gardens.
(The House Hotel, Tel. 0207 431 8000, Fax 0207 433 1775)

The Forte Hotel at 215 Haverstock Hill, London NW3 4RB is a Trust House Forte chain hotel in the same area with all major hotel facilities.
(The Forte Hotel, Tel. 0208 70 400 9037)

Langorf Hotel at 20 Frognal, London NW3 6AG
Good, comfortable hotel, with all facilities.
(Langorf Hotel, Tel. 0207 794 4483)

Alternatively, here are some numbers of hotel booking agencies you can use:

0700 080 8800
0207 309 5500
0207 388 4443

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation

We cannot recommend any specific Bed & Breakfast address used by our members in the past, but there is an agency which will find you a B&B in any chosen area. Prices start at around £45 per night.
(London Bed & Breakfast – 0207 586 2768).

If you prefer to stay in Central London, please keep in mind that the central tourist areas, i.e. Bayswater, Marble Arch and Oxford Street, are about 40 minutes from Daleham Gardens by either taxi or tube (you will have to change tubes to the Northern or Jubilee Line).

The Group Analytic Society's Autumn Workshop:

GROUP ANALYTIC PRAXIS

Adaptations and applications of group analysis
in public health services:

What a group can accomplish for its members

Friday November 3rd Sunday–November 5th 2007
Followed by the Society's A.G.M. on Sunday afternoon

A workshop conducted on National Health Service premises, focusing on practical applications of group analysis to residential, fixed term and other groups in the NHS and other public health services.

The workshop will start on Friday afternoon at 5 p.m. and finish with lunch on Sunday, followed by the AGM from 2 to 4.30 p.m.

Sunderland is only one hour by local train from Newcastle Airport. There are direct flights from all three London airports, Belfast, Bristol, Exeter, Southampton and other cities in the U.K. Budget airlines offer direct low-cost connections from many parts of Europe including Amsterdam, Barcelona, Bergen, Faro, Geneva, Krakow, Milan, Oslo, Paris, Prague, Rome and Valencia.

Fees:

GAS members booking before 9th September	£150
Student members of GAS/ staff of NTW Trust booking before 9th September	£130
Non-GAS members booking before 9th September	£170
GAS members booking after 9th September	£180
Student members of GAS/ staff of NTW Trust booking after 9th September	£170
Non-GAS members booking after 9th September	£195

Further information available from:
sally.mitchison@stw.nhs.uk