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EDITORIAL

Talking about the newsletter the editors were reminded that the Group Analytic Society is among other things, a *corresponding society*. We would like to remind you of this and ask for more writing to each other. We have *good* feedback about the newsletter, but feel that opportunities to respond to what is read are not taken up.

The contributions from the winter workshop and the May weekend reflect the impact on the Society of the recent changes. Most particularly the move from Daleham gardens. Stuart Whitely addresses this a new development to the news letter - a Presidential page. We would like to welcome Stuart, who is already taken up the reins very convincingly.

We would also like to thank Bryan Boswood for his tactful approach to committee matters. Bryan has supported and encouraged us as editors and we have greatly enjoyed working with him.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Murray Cox. He will be remembered for his rich contribution to Group Analysis. He was a memorable Foulkes lecturer, and must also be lauded for introducing Shakespeare to Broadmoor. We are delighted to include pieces from experiences in Brazil (Jason Maratos) and Indonesia (Angela Hobart) in this issue. There must be many more out there in the membership who could increase our understanding in this way. Lets hope this will encourage them.

Once again though, can we please ask for CLEAR printing on one side of A4 only.

Can contributions be sent directly to the editors and not to Belsize Lane. It doesn't matter which editor you send to.

Faxes are NOT SUITABLE for publication, they are excellent for communication if something needs clarification or discussion, but we cannot publish from them .

Looking forward to hearing from you!

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The President's Page

The handover of the the Presidency of the Society took place at the AGM of the Society at the May week-end and I am immediately conscious of the heavy responsibility that this places upon me as the incoming President.

I must first of all pay tribute to my predecessor, Bryan Boswood, who has led the Committee and the Society through some potentially difficult situations in the years he has been in office. I have never ceased to admire his diplomacy and the even-handed way he has held the balance in issues which have required to be considered from many different points of view. What is more- he concluded the business of the AGM, which had a horrendous agenda of items for report and *consideration, exactly* as the time-table indicated!

The Society is in a somewhat turbulent time and in seeking to get to grips with the issues I would like to commence a steady review of our administrative procedures and organisational practices.

Coming from a therapeutic community background it would be my intention to involve committee members and the membership as a whole as much as is feasible in this task.

We are faced with major problems-finding suitable office (and committee-meeting) premises commensurate with the prestige and activities of the Society, increasing the Membership and adjusting to the increasingly International membership, bringing the Journal into a more business-like administration, negotiating the Society's liabilities for and access to the joint King's Fund Library at Daleham Gardens, the Scientific and Research activities and establishing guide-lines for those workshops and events which are the shop-window of the Society, such as the Foulkes' Lecture, Winter Workshop and May week-end and the Introductory Workshops outside the United Kingdom.

It is my wish to review all of these activities in conjunction with the Administrator and the relevant committee Chairperson initially and then with the full committee and lay down agreed procedures but also to invite any member of the Society who has views on these matters, or on any other matter which is thought to require re-thinking, to write to me with the relevant suggestions or point of view. For, instance, from my experiences within the Board of the International Association of Group Psychotherapy I feel that there are issues in what might be called our *Governance* - how we administer, regulate and practice constitutional business such as elections, committee and sub-committee membership, - that could be reviewed. Such review sub-committees need not necessarily be confined to members of the main committee but be open to in-put from delegated members of the Society drawn together to work on the problem.

I look forward to the support and collaboration of the membership in the challenging times ahead.

J. Stuart Whiteley.

Announcement
of the resignation of GAS/IGA Librarian
Maggie Wood

Maggie Wood, GAS/IGA Librarian for the past 14 years, is stepping down at the end of this academic term to pursue other professional and personal interests. We will all miss Maggie's ready helpfulness to countless trainees and GAS and IGA members, her in-depth knowledge of group psychotherapeutic literature, and her sense of responsibility which often led her to go the extra mile in trying to fulfil (even to anticipate!) our needs and requests.

Although Maggie will leave officially on 17 July, she has offered to fill in on a limited basis should we not be able to appoint her successor by that date. In fact it will not be possible for us to do so, so we very much appreciate Maggie's consideration in volunteering to stay on. After the summer break, Maggie will be available on Thursdays only, and will extend her work with us until the end of November.

Because of Maggie's continuing beyond her official date of resignation, it has been decided to hold a Farewell Do for her nearer the date of her actual leaving rather than in July. We will inform you of arrangements for this when these are finalized.

In the meantime, we anticipate being able to advertise for Maggie's successor in September. The Library Association advise us that this timetable should enable us to appoint a Librarian who would be able to take up the post before Maggie's departure.

Duncan Kegerreis Chair , Joint
Library Committee 67 Addison
Gardens London W14 ODT

GAS THEATRE GROUP

Following our last theatre outing to see ART at Wyndhams Theatre (reviewed in this issue by Kevin Power), we are now hoping to arrange a group visit to AMY'S VIEW a new play by David Hare at the Lyttleton Theatre on Saturday September 27 at 2.15.p.m. There will be a social meeting afterwards somewhere adjacent to the theatre to discuss the play.

Anyone who would like to come should contact Bryan Boswood as soon as possible to be sure of a seat. Tickets are £ 16 (preferential group rate) and a stamped and addressed envelope would be appreciated.

We would also very much like to hear from anyone interested in joining our small organising group. We are hoping to be able to hand over in 1998. The duties are not arduous.

Bryan Boswood. Irene Bloomfield. Sheila Thompson.

The 1998 Foulkes Lecture

Dr. Dennis Brown, a former President of the Group Analytic Society, has been invited to deliver the Foulkes Lecture for 1998 on May 15th., 1998 and has graciously accepted.

It will be the year of the Foulkes Centenary and 50 years since the publication of Foulkes's first book. He intends to refer to the 'provocative statement' that the group represents the norm from which individuals deviate and he will consider the relationship between individual and group, issues of fairness and justice, and the ethical implications of the group analytic process.

We look forward to a fascinating evening and more details will be forthcoming in due course.

GROUP ANALYTIC SOCIETY (LONDON).

25th WINTER WORKSHOP 1996-1997.
30th DECEMBER TO 3rd JANUARY 1997

BEING DISPLACED.

The impact on thinking feeling and identity

.. The war years were dreadful ones for my mother's family.. As Japanese immigrants to Hawaii in the early 1920s my grandparents were, in reality, neither Japanese nor American. But when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour they were completely trapped between two identities. Of my grandfather's children at the time of the attack, two were students in Japan, three were students on the American mainland and two were living at home in Hawaii. My uncles were drafted into opposing armies and my grandfather was -imprisoned by the Americans at a concentration camp in Arizona for the duration of the war.

Joseph Swensen Orchestral conductor.

BY chance I came upon this concert programme note some weeks after attending the above workshop and it further helped remind me of the feelings of displacement I experienced myself when as a Scot I found myself travelling down South at a time of the year when every other self-respecting ex-patriot was hastening back to the homeland to celebrate Hogmanay with family and friends. The attraction of London in the winter (and indeed it was cold) together with the knowledge based on past experience of how such workshops afford a chance for one to learn and network proved irresistible This meeting was no exception to that rule.

The format was as before--with early morning position papers setting the discussion and exchange for each of the days. The theme of "Being Displaced" was introduced and explored in different contexts by four distinguished speakers.

Alan Roland (U.S.A.) - spoke of the development of the bicultural self in Indian-Americans and how it varies from the immigrant generation to those raised in the U.S.A. He considered how cultural factors affect the transference and the nature of the self and self-object relationships.

Dieter Nitzgen(Germany:) spoke of Melanie Klein' s introduction of the "depressive position" acknowledged as being a milestone in psychoanalytic thinking and how this. creative concept is usually understood individually as being a by-product of Klein' s personal suffering. Nitzgen extended one's understanding of this wellspring by his reference to her immigration to Britain, the forfeiture of her native language and to her position in the 1930s with Hitler's rise to power and Freud's death looming.

Drawing from his experiences when relocated to Greece and from an account of another whose exile was obligatory Goran Ahlin (Sweden) discussed the social ethos- and the group network processes involved.

The final paper was given by Suma Fernandolho who presented an historical approach to the problems of racism in psychology and psychiatry.

Large group discussion was animated and encouraged by prior experience of the workshop members of one another in the Median groups. The average size of the Median group was fourteen and exposed one to the combined experience of the intimacy of the small group in combination with the varied responses of the large group. Radha Bhat,(UK.) Teresa Howard (U.K.) Siv Andersson (Norway:) were convenors,

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Many other types of displacement were vented: adoption : redundancy, changing class and status through illness or bereavement all individually illustrating how complex the search for kin and kithship can be.

It added tremendously to the occasion in that more than 50% of the participants were of non-U.K. nationality highlighting that the creative potential of such a gathering resides as always in its noisy eclectic interactive quality. Certainly my own displacement was not only more clearly appraised but was much more of a positive than a negative experience.

Anne Gilmore.

Spring Weekend Study Day 17 May 1997

Following this year's Foulkes lecture - *"Traumatic experience in the unconscious life of groups: a fourth basic assumption"* given by Earl Hopper - the Spring Weekend was, for the second time, held in the premises of The British Association of Psychotherapists, and not in the I.G.A. It was for both of us the first time that we had participated on this weekend outside of the I.G.A. At the beginning this fact not only occupied our minds but also a large portion of the discussion of the first large group. The question was raised as to whether the G.A.S. was now homeless, or a refugee, just as Foulkes and Bion were in this country after the war. The history of our Institute and its premises, as well as the relationship between the I.G.A and the G.A.S. as an umbrella organisation of national and international group-psychotherapists, were discussed. The reason of the existence and importance of the GAS, was talked about, and the different functions of the two bodies were clarified. We thought it was important that it was spelled out; that the G.A.S. is the face of group analysis in the world.

The following is a summary of our personal experiences and our observations on the two large groups that were held during this weekend. On the whole we experienced multiple splits in the large group between UK participants and foreigners, between I.G.A and G.A.S. members and between generations. One of the themes which occupied the membership of the large group was the G.A.S.'s separation from the I.G.A and the effect it had on our community. The parallel was drawn between Earl Hopper's lecture and the possible traumatic effects of that separation. The question was also raised as to whether we became a mass or an aggregate in consequence of all this.

The past of the two organisations and also the relationship between them were talked about by the founding members of both. The question was posed as to which one of them is the mother and which is the child; whether the G.A.S. is the elderly mother who was pushed out from its home by the child and had to seek refuge in a cellar as an immigrant, to start again homeless in poverty. It was questioned as to whether it is necessary or unnecessary to have a building for the G.A.S. or it is good-enough to be a tenant somewhere else. The parallels were found between Foulkes and Bion as refugees in England after leaving their country of origin and the trauma they suffered through that. Oliver Sacks was also mentioned, whose father moved from the East End of London - where he was a GP after having left his country of origin - into this very building where our Study Day of the Spring Weekend was held.

There were long discussions about the way the RAP. was able to raise large amounts of funds in order to finally find a home, through buying this spacious enough building which became a suitable home for itself. How could the G.A.S. raise money again? Is it necessary at all? The issue then about the present I. G.A building became the focus of discussion, and the fact that this building was originally bought by the huge fund raising efforts in which the majority of money came from generous donations of GAS members.

Furthermore, telling images emerged in the first large group session such as an aspirin being stuck in someone's throat. This brought to our attention the difficulty which our

community had in swallowing this 'bitter pill' and without which no healing of this traumatic separation and moving on is possible. The process in the large group was also described as the licking of narcissistic wounds which does not allow healing and perhaps also contributed to the splitting in the group. The other image was a battlefield, where some people got hurt and wounded. This followed an attack on a German participant, who felt not listened to or heard, but hurt by the attack. Others also felt not heard and unconnected.

The second large group felt to some extent like a field after battle with people gone missing and the remaining ones trying to make sense of what had happened. Members of the G.A.S. who came from abroad felt excluded from the discussion about the separation between IG.A. and G.A.S. It was also rather hard to sit there as a graduating IG.A. student, and a foreigner, in this space of in-between. We felt a lot of empathy for the people from abroad who felt isolated and even excluded, attacked or not responded to. One of these people raised the point of not knowing whom one is talking to and in which role, as a national or an international member of the I. G.A. or G.A.S. or both.

Some of the participants felt like they were listening to parents, or a couple whom are quarrelling. There was another picture of a vulnerable infant in the group. The necessity of a midwife came up who could facilitate the birth of creativity between "these bodies". The necessity of an incubator, or an incubatory period, emerged in the group through a foreign voice. There has to be a protective and protected period in which that change can happen.

The question was brought to the large group's attention - by a senior member of both the IG.A. and G.A.S. - as to whether it was possible to keep in mind the separation of the IG.A and G.A.S., and at the same time to discuss the theme of the Foulkes lecture.

The large group briefly responded to that invitation, by thinking about a new Messiah. There were thoughts around envy in relation to new ideas in group analytic thinking. Who is going to take the empty chair which someone left in the middle of the group? Later the point of the succession of the presidency of the G.A.S. was brought up. The German member who was previously attacked told a tale of a wise king introducing a common language in a country he ruled where previously there were many different ones, and this language became the one which was passed on to future generations, which from then on served as a mediator and as a uniting force.

It was a difficult and short time in which all this was talked about and shared in the group. It felt hard to find one's voice in the midst of all those mixed feelings. This was accentuated by the fact that there were only three students - and all from the 4th year - present on this event. The fact that the up-coming generation of the IG.A. was under-represented on such an event is curious. Is this really due to being exhausted by the course, or is there a general feeling amongst the students of not wanting to get involved in the parents' and grandparents' quarrelling? It felt worthwhile for us to hear all these stories and the history of previous generations in order to build a bridge between the past and present of our organisations.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Dear Anne and Sheila,

You were encouraging those present at the Society's AGM to write a review of the Foulkes Lecture Study day, Saturday 17 May 1997. My response is the following:

The presentation by Earl Hopper of Traumatic Experience representing a fourth Basic Assumption pattern in the unconscious life of groups was a compressed conceptual tour de force. A multimedia production traversing various fields with a contents list that read like a full length work.

Despite the over-compression I found it produced and presented in an admirably clear, evenly presented and well paced manner.

Earl Hopper is possessed not only of an acute psychoanalytic mind but also an analogical imagination. This is a combination of faculties well suited to the system builder.

What was put forward was the matured product of two decades of steadily extended thought. This opportunity was not wasted on the night.

For those who have heard Earl Hopper at intervals along the way in his intellectual odyssey, we would probably not be surprised at their latest emergence. For those new to the whole system for the first time the demands may well have been mind-reeling.

The following day's study day in part was given over to attempting to smooth out some differences in the rates at which different people were able to assimilate what was delivered.

Furthermore, the response given by Dr Lionel Kreeger seemed to me equivocal. Always genial and I good humoured, initially praising and subsequently sceptical.

My own uncertainty about whether the New Found Territory was not actually a sub-continent of the Dependency Basic Assumption pattern left things in suspension for the following day.

At the weekend the BAP at Mapesbury Avenue, NW London became once again the temporary home from home for our newly nomadic Society.

Participants were invited to choose and direct themselves to which room and which groups and conductors they wanted, a free for all which seemed to resolve itself with remarkably little fuss.

My own group was fairly heavy with senior members of the society as well as two absolute newcomers who were instantly made welcome. It contained - if that word can ever properly be applied - Adele Mittwoch who I find can usually be relied upon to stimulate unusual angles of enquiry.

Our first preoccupation was with the Group's capacity. What might we be capable of? Interest then turned to the relationship between the newer and more established members of the group.

Other themes included the manner in which ideas are presented and received by others, tradition and novelty, the subordination of women's contributions, 'masculine' and 'feminine' qualities and attributes, envy and its pre-emption, the behaviour of woodlice, the Holocaust and the 'necessary' existence of God, Britain's newly established Labour Government, psychoanalytic and Group-Analytic viewpoints and ways of approach, distrust and aggression, motives for selecting this group. This was by no means an exhaustive recollection of a very free range forum.

I found it risk taking, courageous, creative and diverse. What was striking was the spirit of mutual generosity and inclusion. The group was quite generous and nurturant towards itself and as a result developed a considerable self-generated momentum.

The Larger group (where does Median end and Large begin?) met in the main lecture room of the BAP. Although this gained the seal of approval of the society's architects it evoked mixed reactions from others.

Peter Gonggrup used the term "endearment" in an ironical fashion to describe the Society's mixed reception over the years to his ideas on birth spacing, parenthood and intermarriage. Mention was also made of the contrasting outlooks of Western European and East Asian thinking.

The renewed upheaval and dislocation of the Society at the current time seems to have evoked a focussing and crystallising of Peter's thinking.

Gradually this opened into a discussion of the multiple significance of money, homelessness, displacement, voluntary and forced migration and the search for viable and enduring premises for the newly re-independent Society.

Much of this was cast in familial developmental terms as appears to be our current interpretive inclination. Adolescence, divorces, separation, adoptions, becoming orphaned and so forth.

The offspring of the London Group-Analytic Society in other countries have now become the guides for the founding society. This is part of the natural law of generational succession with which the Society seems to be having psychological difficulties at present.

Earl Hopper and Lionel Kreeger took the opportunity to sniff each other's positions out a bit further and a German-Jewish tension which was present in my small group became re-cast into the larger situation.

Forums such as the Study day act as an opportunity not only for family reunions and the chance to renew intimacies but also somehow for those at odds with each other to reconcile some of their differences in a gradual, periodic, informal way. Having had the space in between to re-consider one another.

This brings me to a background issue which seemed to me to be influential in the first Large group. That is the nature of our commitments to the past and how much and which aspects of our pasts are necessary to secure a better future.

Some felt that retrospection into our developmental history was purposeless, potentially unending and narcissistically indulgent. Others remembered Santayana's words that those who failed to learn the lessons of History would be condemned to repeat them. Both psychoanalysis and Group analysis live in this 'tension arc' between these two tendencies.

Perhaps nowhere is this better manifested than in the legacy we have acquired of German/Jewish antagonism. As well as being one of the most intractable banes of our Society this is also one of the most enduring continuity links in the development of Group-Analysis since the Second World War.

In a sense this was the ultimate background to the Foulkes lecture and the source of derivation of its most powerful clinical examples.

Over almost fifty years our group techniques have hardly yet become refined enough to cope with events of such enormity.

Within the total situation of the human group (humanity) what took place in the Holocaust was not an isolated, detached phenomenon of sub group encapsulated victims and omnipotent perpetrators. Rather, it signified the more gradual development of a global culture which facilitated these disparities. A culture of fear, silence, avoidance and neglect which enabled the creation of a hitherto unequalled, unbounded, unmoderated centre of trauma and madness with its rippling aftermath.

It is too much to ask that events of this dimension and complexity should be borne by a single mind. The group is necessary to manage and resolve the strain.

That seems to me why it was necessary for the 1997 Foulkes lecturer having come so far with the aid of his groups, that he should re-submit his labours back to the group at the Study day.

There is always some risk that in taking from the group and recreating in one's own fashion the process of communicating back what one has received may miscarry. However, this is surely an intrinsic part of any creative endeavour and when it succeeds, as by and large it seemed to at the Study day, the result is a strengthening of the individual and the group.

SOUTH
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE NHS
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*Child Mental Health
Wycombe Clinic*

A service for children, adolescents and families

Letter from Brazil

Mesdames A. Harrow and S.
Thompson, Editors,
Group-Analytic Contexts,
The Group Analytic Society (London),
90 Belsize Village,
Belsize Lane,
London NW3 5BE

26th June, 1997

Dear Ann and Sheila,

A brief look at the membership list of our Society shows that we have only one member from Brazil. This absence of connections with this great country should not be taken to imply that group analysis is underdeveloped in Brazil. I was fortunate to discover that the truth is, fortunately, very different,

Thanks to a collaboration, at my Child Mental Health Clinic in High Wycombe, with an excellent Brazilian Child Psychotherapist, Ms Rita Testa, I was invited to give a series of lectures at the 9th Congresso Brasileiro de Psicoterapia de Grupo. This congress was organised on behalf of the Associacao Brasileira de Psicoterapia Analitica de Grupo (ABP AG) by the Association of Porto Alegre, Centro de Estudos Atendimento e Pesquisa de Grupos (CEAPEG). ABEP AG has about 900 members and the Congress was attended by 520. Even by simply looking at numbers one can see that there is a lot of interest and enthusiasm about group analysis in Brasil.

Participation in the Congress only enhances the above impression. Workers from all over Brazil presented their work and ideas which were admirably novel and rich. Group Therapy is applied in every imaginable field (from the usual mental health settings, to prisons, and in education as well as in organisations) and in numerous forms (from once-weekly, open ended groups to couples' groups, family groups, brief therapy, finite therapy and many others) and from diverse ideological backgrounds (from the strict Kleinian to cognitive-behavioural as well as systemic and psycho dramatic, to mention a few). I was very interested to find out about the *reflective groups*, and, about a variation of our large groups in which, among other things, the conductor is chosen by the group rather than appointed by the organisers of the event.

HEALING AND SPIRIT MEDIUMS IN BALI, INDONESIA

Bicycles and Hondas are stacked against a stone wall of a small house in a remote hamlet, far from the tourist routes. The early morning sunlight is suffusing the quiet rice fields and running streams. The volcanoes in the distance are shrouded in mist. People carrying offerings on their head approach the house to consult the spirit medium who lives there. The medium is dressed in white, the colour of purity, and is awaiting the clients while sitting in her special household shrine where she will go into trance.

This is healing on the island. It is here that I did research on traditional healing systems for two years. Bali is one of the many islands in the Indonesian archipelago. It is a tiny Hindu enclave in what is essentially a sea of Moslems. Its population comprises just over two million people who for the most part still live in the rural areas, relying largely on irrigated rice as their staple product. The society is loosely based on the ideology of the Indian caste system.

Irrespective of change and modernisation spirit mediums are still striving in the society. Clients consult mediums for a wide variety of reasons: disharmony or disorder in the household, inheritance problems, illness, a fire breaking out in the household, theft, crop failure, death or suicide, or even just such a problem as a hornet's nest in the shrine. Sometimes patients have already visited another traditional healer or western trained medical practitioner, but to no avail. Often then, or in the last resort, they will consult a medium.

Mediums are generally, but not exclusively so, women. Like in other parts of the world they seem often to have gone through a mentally disturbed period before taking on the role. The incentive to become a medium is not financial. The income a medium earns is in any case negligible. Spirit mediums come to their calling through divine inspiration. In line with this, mediums are referred to as balian tetakson. Taksu is conceived of as a deified personalised spirit who acts as an intermediary between celestial beings and humans. These spirits empower healers to communicate with agents of the imperceptible world of darkness.

Mediums are in a special elevated shrine in their home when they go into trance. Trance, nadi (from dadi, to become or exist) implies here an elevated level of reality. It is a state of disassociation which may last from 15 seconds to 20 minutes. During this time the medium may be entered by deities, spirits or ancestors.

Most clients hear of a spirit medium through word of mouth, from a friend or relative. It is usual, moreover, to travel some distance to her home. Clients come in small groups of about 3 to 7 people and sessions may last for about one hour. They may consult a medium only once, or more often, but usually not more than three times. Clients always bring offerings of fruit, rice cakes, flowers, textiles and give some money to the medium, depending on their means. The essence (sari) of the offerings is said to be imbibed by the heavenly beings, while the medium retains the outward form. The clients say they are 'paying their debts to the gods' with these colourful, variegated offerings.

Once the villagers arrive at the quiet home of the medium, they sit patiently on pavilions waiting for their turn to be advised by the spirits that speak through the medium. It is evident that the milieu already contributes to the cure. Arthur Kleinman (1980) also drew attention to the importance of this factor during healing sessions in Taiwan. In Taiwan, as in Bali, clients gain support from friends and relatives, as well as strangers from hamlets some distance away. It is usual that there are from about seven to twenty-five villagers in the home at the same time. Here they feel at ease to air difficult feelings and thoughts - grief, pain, fear, anxiety and anger - to others. These are rarely expressed in daily life as the Balinese point out that troubles should not be communicated, Le. 'rot should be kept in the belly' (berek di basang). Conversation in the medium's home, moreover, follows no fixed agenda; this is comparable to experiential groups in the west.

An actual seance with a spirit medium too can be compared in some ways to family or group therapy which emphasises that the whole is greater than the part. Bateson (1979) called this

a holistic view which focuses on the pattern that connects. This is demonstrated figuratively in

the diagram below. The space, or vase, between the faces represents the process between people. In Bali this space should though be seen as an image-rich ether, graced with colours, geometric significance and cosmic spirits. During the seance part and whole contain each other in an on-going process of interrelationship and communication, including not only human beings, but also the cosmic agents.

The vase and the faces.

One of the main goals of a medium is to reframe reality, and reorganise the roles and codes of discourse and behaviour of the clients. The ethnomusicologist Marina Roseman's words come here to mind in poetically describing the healing sessions among the Temiar in Malaysia:

The unique configuration of interactive performances roles, coupled with the peculiar textures of the media whereby those roles are enacted - sound, movement, touch, spatial orientation, fragrance, colour, lightening - engenders an arena in which paramount reality has been shifted. (1991, p.1470)

The description is also applicable to a seance with a Balinese midium. The device of reframing as an effective instrument of transformation of attitudes and experiences is recognised in therapeutic sessions world-wide. In Bali it comes to the fore when we look at an actual case study. The reason for grief in the family related to the death of a young boy of thirteen. (This happened during the time of my research.) He suddenly fell unconscious while doing exercises in the sports field and died almost immediately afterwards. The family was devastated, already because he was the sole inheritor. They had no other sons. After reciting a brief religious incantation, the medium went into trance and the spirit of the deceased boy entered her. The dialogue between the spirit medium and the family members present highlights the expressive, performative quality of the seance.

Medium (sDirit): The spirit is now descending. Mother, father, grandfather, you are sad as your only son died suddenly. Do not grieve for for I am content where I am resting now, at the shrine of the goddess of death, Durga. My death was not caused by any mistake you made (- a very important fact in a society where malign forces or witchcraft may be suspected in unusual circumstances of illness or death). Although I was still young, my appointed time had come to leave this world. Return home in harmony with one another. Take care of my younger sister who is alone.

Grandfather: I am content to hear your words, but talk to your mother. It would have been easier for us if you had been ill for at least three days (as we would have more time to adjust to your death).

The seance goes on in this vein for about ten more minutes. In due course the family .will

consult the medium again to enquire what rites to carry out for the deceased. The seance gives an idea how public symbols pertaining to the spirit world serve private needs to supply the clients with a new story or 'narrative'. Such a story can be viewed as a dominant frame for lived experience. As Bruner put it:

We create the units of experience and meaning from the continuity of life. Every telling is an arbitrary imposition of meaning on the flow of memory in that we highlight some causes and discount others; that is every telling is interpretative (1986, p. 7).

The above discussion illustrates the degree to which states of illness and health are context bound. Cultural rules and values determine in large part how they are expressed and experienced. Yet lives are multi-dimensional, and it can be suggested that any culture will provide the people with a range of alternative stories for interpreting and evaluating their experiences of well-being, illness or distress. So healing has to be examined on different levels: physiological psychological, moral, social and cultural, taking account of the human being, his or her community and the universe.

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AGEING GROUP ANALYSTS

When Martin Grotjahn was 79 he wrote: I do not mind being 79, but to be soon 80 *is* a different matter. Facing 80, I probably have to realise that I am already old-to my surprise. I don't really feel it. "Martin had a way of putting things in words as well as in his wonderful cartoons, which I cannot hope to emulate, but he said exactly what I feel myself. Approaching 79 *is* strange enough, because in some ways I still feel quite young, if being passionate about a variety of *issues is* a sign of youthfulness, but approaching 80 next year *is* indeed another matter, and there *is* no getting away from the fact that 80 is old.

Even being nearly 79 has its disadvantages. There is the loss of energy. I can no longer finish with my last patient at 6 or 7 p.m. and turn up for a scientific meeting at 8 p.m.

without the likelihood of dozing off half way through, even *if it is* a talk I really want to hear, and even, if I manage to stay awake, *it is' increasingly difficult* not only to remember the name of the lecturer, but to recall what he or she said.

When it comes to reading the journal, no matter how good and interesting the content, I get appalled at the stack of various unread professional journals cluttering up the space which I really needed to keep for the books I would like to

get. This inability to get to grips with *all* the reading I want to do is quite unrelated to the quality of the material, which I know to be excellent and interesting. It is merely the effect of the inevitable slowing down and never quite catching up with all the things that have to be done, and which earlier on presented no problem and were just taken for granted.

All this means that there are few G.A.S. activities which I can participate in, at this stage, but I would hate to leave the Group Analytic Society. I joined it early on in its existence and felt more at home in it than in any of the other professional organisations I have belonged to, but I have to ask myself whether I want to pay the £110 subscription for what I can still manage to attend. I know this question has been raised by other ageing or retired members, who have been told to contact the treasurer, which they are unlikely to do. I wonder whether a special category of membership for the older long standing members could be considered. I ask this question with reluctance and a measure of embarrassment, but am doing so because this request is not only or even primarily about money, but about recognition.

Irene Bloomfield

"A RT" By Yasmina Reza

Seats were booked for the Grand circle at Wyndhams Theatre. However this is not so grand as the Royal Circle, which was where about half of the G.A.S. theatre group managed to seat themselves before the production of this play on Saturday 11th May. This unconscious act - of grandiosity or confusion - was resolved when the true purchasers of the Royal Circle seats turned up and turfed us out. We decamped to the Grand circle - which wasn't grand but lofty.

Once seated we were confronted by the drawn curtain, in the middle of which hung a flat vertical surface of wooden slats which later appeared as the reverse side of the painting which is the ubiquitous object around which the play moves. Hanging thus before the performance, it suggested that we the audience were on the canvas which was to be appreciated by the productions characters. And they were Serge, Mark and Yuan, three long-standing friends living separately in Paris. The scene changes were marked solely by a revolving panel in the wall opposite the audience, with separate paintings differentiating Serge and Mark's flats. Otherwise the scene remained the same throughout - a large white, square carpet on which were arranged a low central table, and three chairs at three of the four sides open to the audience. The panelled walls like the carpet and the canvas were white.

Serge has bought a new painting for FF200000 by Anteous. Mark is appalled not only by the price but also by the

painting, which is wholly white apart from a few very faint diagonal lines across it. And it is out of their reactions to this canvas, and the interactions that then follow, that the play builds.

It is a true comedy - it moves from the muted to the loudly outraged to, at the end, a communion - like coda. The comedy lies in Yuan and Mark's responses to each other's reactions to Serge having spent So much money on such a canvas, and that he should admire and love it. 15 years of friendship becomes an enormous quarrel as in turn two of them join forces against the third to tell him how dreadful they feel he has been or is being in their joint friendship. Each is subjected to a rough analysis by his two friends, one after the other saying what has been building over 15 years yet hasn't been spoken - for the sake of convention. Boundaries had been felt as secure and immutable, yet they begin to tumble beneath the white stare of the painting.

At first they present in pairs to the audience, each explaining to Serge how the absent member has reacted to the news, as well as Mark and Yuan to one another. Each pair has secrets from the third, which had remained secret until the arrival of the white painting. Their reactions to this painting - literally a blank screen - brings about an increasingly heated, frank: and honest exchange of views about one another. What they had been thinking and saying behind one another's backs for the previous fifteen years is now done before the whole trio. The audience

watches as the blank screen watches. Pairs swap and they take on one another in what closely resembled groupanalysis, despite there being only three.

Tensions arise and get aired only *for* further tensions to be exposed. The physical climax comes when Mark finally yet unintentionally punches Yuan during a scuffle. This shocks all of them into looking more reflectively at what has come to pass. Gradually they realise what it is that they may lose should their conflicts become so open. They manage to go and share a meal together, and the final scene is of them washing off the water-based pen drawing which Mark had drawn on the canvas, of a skier mouing downhill. Mark speaks the final words which are of the human condition, that the painting "represents a man who moues across a space and disappears" .

I t was not a funny play, though there was plenty of laughter. At first I felt that it was the laughter to be expected at a farce, guffawing and loud, as though those laughing had come for a humorous time and so laughter, whether or not apt, must be the way to react to this play; after all it was billed as a comedy, and that means laughter, right? After thirty minutes of this 90 minute production(!) I sensed other and deeper things were surfacing in the play. Laughter became more tentative, the listening more important as the movement between the three players became clearer. This was a text which reminded me of Dr. Anthony's writing (in the book written jointly with Foulkes) about Sartre's play, "In Camera", where similarly three actors are trapped in Purgatory and reflect each other in the absence of mirrors. "Art" is an update

on this concept which is not set in a phantasy location but placed within a plausible location and a plausible friendship. So *far* as any scripted play can be thus, I thought it demonstrated group-analysis as it may actually happen among three "ordinary" people rather than in a clinical setting. Of course I doubt that the playwright had this particular intention, yet the accuracy of the writing in portraying human interaction and the audience's generally sensitive response suggested that Yasmina Reza has produced an accurate play.

The white canvas acted as the friends' blank screen in the analytic sense, absorbing all their aggression and projections and yet remaining there. *The* turmoil which lay beneath their friendship unfolded to show them what they had ignored hitherto. Within the play, of course, there was a friendship and not an analytic group in which members are strangers. So they had to find a solution to the rifts they had uncovered.

Serge lets Mark draw on his canvas which was seen by Yuan as a great sacrifice. Yet, soliloquising, Serge tells the audience that he had lied when telling Mark that he had not known that the marker ink was water-soluble. This hints that a great deal of what is considered close friendship is based on tact and courtesy, white lies and diplomatic care. Mark's existential coda, that the painting represents a man who moues across a space and then disappears, suggests that the passage of life is its own justification.

Kevin Power.

LAUREN E. STORCK, PH.D.

1 JULY 1997

DEAR GROUP ANALYSTS,

IF ANYONE IS PLANNING TO ATTEND THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AGPA (AMERICAN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION) IN CHICAGO, FEBRUARY 16 TO 21, 1998, PLEASE KNOW THAT YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN ME AT A LUNCH HOUR TABLE, EACH DAY, TO CHAT ABOUT GROUP ANALYSIS, SO THAT MORE PEOPLE IN THE STATES CAN LEARN ABOUT GROUP ANALYSIS (CONVERSATION HOUR, BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH, I BELIEVE). I HOPE THAT PEOPLE WILL STOP BY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT GROUP ANALYSIS, THE TRAINING PROGRAMS, AND THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION AS WELL. IF YOU HAVE TIME TO HELP ME "MAN" THE TABLE, THAT WOULD BE GREAT. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL OR WRITE OR EMAIL.

BY THE WAY, EARL HOPPER WILL BE LEADING A SPECIAL INSTITUTE ON FEBRUARY 16th, AND THERE WILL BE SEVERAL OTHER GROUP ANALYSTS PRESENTING AND ATTENDING. I HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE.

Regards,

AGPA, etc.