Iwona Soltysinska

Jagiellonian University
Extension

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Professional Affiliations

OPUS – national representative
(Poland)
ISPSO - member

Publications

Kossowska, M., Sołtysińska, I.
(2002). Szkolenia pracowników
a rozwój organizacji (Personnel
Training and Organization
Development), Oficyna
Ekonomiczna, Kraków
Kossowska M, Sołtysińska, I.
(2005). Budowanie zespołów.
Materiały dla Trenerów. (Team
building – materials for trainers.)
Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków
Sołtysińska I., Szymura, B.
(2009) Working memory and
arousal. Individual differences in
speed and capacity of
information processing.
Iwona Sołtysińska (1999)
Working Memory task
performance as a function of
attentional load and task
difficulty
Iwona Sołtysińska (1997). Does
the level of arousal explain intra-
individual changes in cognitive
task performance?

Use and abuse of organisational structure as an avoidance of conflict and rivalry – the consequences for organisational culture.

This paper explores the process of change during a long term consultancy intervention in an international, family run business. There are two particular aspects of change that will be explored: (I) the specific way in which organisational structure was used to sustain an unclear authority structure and to resolve a rivalry between two key organisational players; and (ii) the issue of narcissist leadership in regard to its constructive and destructive aspects described by many authors (e.g. Stein, Kets de Vries and Miller). The paper will commence with a brief description of the organisation and the consultancy contract, before moving on to an exploration of the two specific aspects as described above.

The paper will continue with an exploration of the reasons for the change processes, the role of the consultant and the dynamics that ensued with regard to the specific way in which organisational structure was used to sustain a lack of clarity around the authority structure and the way it enabled an avoidance of any attempt to confront and resolve a rivalry between two key players. The paper continues with a discussion of the consequences of dealing with leadership rivalry by using and abusing organisational structure. It will be shown that as time progressed, the structure was used to a greater degree to avoid and cover conflicts and competition; and the way this affected the consultancy.

The paper will then continue with an exploration of narcissist leadership and the way that this contributed to the organisational dynamics and structural change. It will be seen how this case study supports Stein's claim that a narcissistic leadership style may transform from "constructive" into "reactive" as a result of changes in the environment. A result of the structural change was to make it impossible for the narcissistic leader to contribute to the management of the organisation. Eventually, he was expelled from the organisation.

In conclusion I will explore the future directions of on-going consultancy work within the organisation.

Patricia Walsh

Organisational Consultant;
Psychologist

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t

Professional Affiliations

British Psychological Society;
Tavistock Society of
Psychotherapists;
A.K. Rice Institute;
Group Analytic Society.

WHO CARES?

A Reflection on a Personal Experience of the NHS.

I will describe my involvement following the emergency admission of an elderly patient to a High Depency Unit, on a Friday, and her one month stay and treatment. I will explore issues around care and compassion, dignity and respect. These issues have had a lot of media attention and concern, particularly over the past two years. This is a reflective piece posing questions for consideration. It is a response to the challenges and conflicts I experienced, as a mental health professional and as a daughter. The patient was my mother, and the final statement will be hers.

I will give a description of the context and circumstances leading up to the admission, providing vignettes of her experience and mine. Observations of actions and dynamics between staff, as well as with patients and their families will be considered, according to the Tavistock Model of Observational Studies, as will my involvement in ward rounds. Developing collaboration with some staff will be considered. It is informed by Isobel Menzies Lyth's ground-breaking work on the NHS and Tim Dartington's more recent work on Managing Vulnerability - both of which examine the cost of caring for the professionals and the family. Issues of abuse and neglect will be included.

In response to our society's increasing marginalisation of the elderly and their family members, I will explore Marina Mojovic's work on socio-psychic retreats. The validation of such a single person piece of work will be considered. Do we, can we, value it as relevant as a snapshot or not? I will also pose questions about whether the fields of psychoanalysis and groups analysis have colluded with being squeezed out in work with medical colleagues. Has Mental Health become another enclave? Do we work hard enough to have a voice and share our understanding, or are we getting lost with needy patients and needy staff? Does meaningful contact with patients and staff only become confined to the therapy room? I will reference Tom Main's work on Therapeutic Communities, and Balint's work on groups.

Elisabetta Pasini

Anthropologist and Social Researcher
Senior Consultant at Future Concept Lab

E:

Professional Affiliations

Member of Ariele - Italian Association of Psychosocioanalysis (www.psicosocioanalisi.it)
Member of Opus

Publications

Author of *Carisma, il segreto del leader* (*Charisma, the Leader's Secret*), Garzanti, 2009

Charisma as Liminal Space: new perspectives for the charismatic phenomenon in the digital era

The notion of charisma has always been controversial, often reckoned by social sciences - anthropology, sociology, psychoanalysis - as a "multi-meaning concept" able to contain several opposite dimensions: religion and politics, individual and collective, tradition and change, conservation and innovation. All these dimensions are, furthermore, often conflicting with each other: the religious dimension of a transcendental world opposing the political immanent dimension; the individual commitment of the bearer of charisma hiding the strong influence of the followers; and the source of charisma, that often lies on mythology and tradition, unfitting with the message of change that inspires many charismatic movements. In addition, the religious aspect of the notion of charisma - Charisma and Grace share the same etymological root, from the Greek "kharis", meaning "a gift conceded by God to someone for the wellness of the entire community"- fulfils an "expectation of the extraordinary" that becomes crucial as a guide for action in times of continuous social change.

From an anthropological and sociological perspective the notion of charisma highlights how stable and unstable forms of organisation interact in a dialectic process (Max Weber). One could therefore say that the notion of charisma tends to escape rigid definitions, because all its multiple elements overlap at the "crossroad" of different times - past, present and future- and different spaces - the world as it is and the world as it should/could be.

I have been investigating the notion of charisma for many years. From the beginning my first guess, which always lead my research, was that all the ambivalent and controversial meanings that charisma contains represent a promising clue to explore the new forms that leadership takes in the new 2.0 reality. Stable and unstable forms of organisation continuously interact at the boundaries between the real and the digital worlds, where "horizontal" mechanisms of leadership and membership become increasingly visible in groups, organisations and social movements, suggesting the rise of a new "power of the followers". The "charismatic bond" between leader and followers could therefore be a useful clue for a better understanding of all the new dynamics between micro and macro phenomena of change.

I will delve into those issues starting with my book on charisma (E.Pasini, F.Natili, *Charisma the Leader's Secret,* Garzanti, 2009), that contains 13 interviews with some international protagonists of the contemporary social scene – entrepreneurs, writers, designers, journalists, anthropologists, psychoanalysts - that in different ways and from different perspectives championed a new notion of charisma. Deepening charisma in connection with creativity, entrepreneurship, communication, cultural differences, I will therefore argue that we should dismiss the traditional notion of charisma as an authoritarian form of leadership centred on the strong personality of the leader, and look instead at the potentiality of charisma as a "liminal space" (Van Gennep), where opposite meanings could lead to the rise of new projects.

Clearing the idea of charisma from the overwhelming influence of the leader, thus rescuing the creative energy that is part of its essence, is the main purpose of this work. From this perspective, charisma can be seen as "*scattered energy able to start a creative circuit that enhances social bonds through the sharing of a common project"*; thus playing a fundamental role of catalyst of the fluid elements of reality, if only we are able to release it from the shattering power of a seductive leader.

Elizabeth Cotton

Academic, Middlesex University Business School & Founding Director of Surviving Work

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t

An emancipatory model for building mental health at work: the international role of trade union education methods

This paper will examine the difficulties and resistances within trade unions to take up the issue of mental health at work. It will look at the costs to the labour movement from blocking debate about the politics of mental health and not engaging with alternative models of mental health at work. The paper goes on to argue that there is realistic and unique potential for developing a progressive model for building mental health at work, apart from the dominant model of positive psychology, using emancipatory education methods. Exploring the conceptual and methodological parallels between trade union education methods and psychoanalytic processes, the paper proposes an emancipatory model for addressing mental health at work, which emphasizes consciousness raising, collective problem solving, solidarity and containment.

Publications

Cotton, E. (2014) Transnational Regulation of Temporary Agency Work: Compromised partnership between Private Employment Agencies and Global Union Federations. *Work, Employment and Society.*

Cotton, E. and Royle, T. (2014) Transnational Organizing: A case study of contract workers in the Colombian mining industry. *British Journal of Industrial Relations.*

Croucher, R. & Cotton, E. (2013) Case study: Anglo-American and HIV/AIDS. In Gooderham, P. & Nordhaug, O. *International Management: Cross-Boundary Challenges.* Oxford: Blackwell

Cotton, E., Kline, R. and Morton, C. (2013) Following Francis: reversing performance in the NHS from targets to teams. *People & Strategy.*

Cotton, E. and Gumbrell-McCormick, R (2012) Global Unions as imperfect multilateral organizations: An international relations perspective. *Economic and Industrial Democracy.*

Croucher, R. and Cotton, E (2011) *Global Unions Global Business. Second Edition.* London: Libri Publishing.

Richard Ledborg Hansen

Senior Consultant at Type2dialog, Denmark
Industrial Ph.D. Fellow, Doctoral School of Management ·
External lecturer

Copenhagen Business School

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Professional Affiliations
OPUS, ISPSO

Digital Relationships - Its Residual Deposits in Organizations – Implications and Potentials.
Experiences from group relations exercises with student bodies from a Danish University

This paper presents the experience and observations gained under two group relations exercises (Miller, 1990) conducted as part of two university courses for graduate students at CBS (Copenhagen Business School). The paper suggests that despite a decidedly clear ability to present themselves as authentic members of temporary organizations, the students also displayed a clear inability to connect to the presentations of each other. This apparent high skillset in presenting, but low skillset in relating, led us to formulate a thesis of Facebook behaviour aimed at describing the presence of residual deposits from technology in organizations and its effect on individuals' ability to connect to one another. Based on the case study, this paper describes indications and suggests potential implications hereof. Given the inherent enhancement possibilities of technology, our expectations for entertainment-rich information and highly interesting communication are sky-high and rising. With a continuous increase in digitized communication follows a decrease in face-to-face encounters and our ability to engage in inter-personal relationships is suffering for it (Davis, 2013).

The behaviour described in this paper suggests a regressive behaviour of splitting-like characteristics (Hinshelwood, 1989). I suggest it is conditioned and legitimized by the use of technology at the risk of churning out callous leaders with highly overt people skills who are dangerously close to being incapable of building trusting relationships. Since society is constantly looking to technology (Howard-Jones, 2011) for increases in effectiveness and efficiency, we have similarly embraced digital communication and digitized information dissemination – at the risk of ignoring the regressive dark side of technology. However, from a system psychodynamic perspective technology also holds a promise for precisely the same reasons – because the enormous amount of digitized communication "out there" represents data waiting to be sifted through and decoded.

In the paper we have applied the term "Facebook Behaviour" with reference to a particular behaviour characterized by presenting your self and representations of selected self in the hope of getting a response. The responsive behaviour you expose your self to can oscillate between complete ignorance at one of the scale and a "Like" and possible a short comment at the other.

Paper **1.6** Friday 16.00 / Room 6

Dr Robyn Vesey

Organisational Consultant

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Professional Affiliations

Chartered Clinical Psychologist, British Psychological Society (BPS); Practitioner member, Association of Cognitive Analytic Therapy (ACAT); Associate member, OPUS

The market model and its defences within healthcare organisations – the envious undermining of the tasks of health care.

The market model has been influencing health and social care in the UK since the neoliberal policies of the Conservative government 1978-1997, yet the structural changes brought about by more recent reforms, in particular the Health and Social Care Act (2012), have brought purchaser power and competition in health and social care services abruptly to front line service delivery. The socio-political question of how to manage and allocate resources within healthcare continues to be a civic challenge and the market model is seen as one ideological and political response to this challenge. However, various writers have called for a deeper examination of the implicit logic, discourses and dynamics of market principles in our public services and social life (e.g. Sandel, 2012; Hoggett, 2006; 2010; Iles,2011). Critics have proposed that the recent NHS changes introduce a "pull to perversion" (Ballatt & Campling, 2011) where the work of healthcare is undermined. In a similar way, socio-psychoanalytic thinkers have argued that the market model results in caring relationships being transformed into instrumental relations which are less caring (Dartington, 2012), perhaps exemplified at worst in the brutality of care described and investigated in the Francis report.

This paper uses a socio-psychoanalytic approach to better understand the threats of instrumental relations to the caring project. In the tradition of psychoanalytic thinking about the tasks of healthcare (Menzies-Lyth, 1959), it will be argued that the impact of the market model can be understood in terms of a new set of defences with regard to the anxiety about human vulnerability and powerlessness that the healthcare task evokes. Primary among the dynamic of the market is an anxiety and a denial about the limitations of healthcare resources. Coupled with instrumental relations, this results in a mistrustful toxic entanglement, where patient and staff perceive insincerity in caring exchanges. In this way the possibility of an authentic and therefore transforming emotional connection with vulnerability for both staff and patient is undermined. The consequences can be understood within the dynamics of envy and examples will be given at service, management and socio-political levels.

Giovanni Foresti MD Phd

Psychiatrist

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Professional Affiliations
Psychiatrist, full member of the International Psychoanalytic Association and organizational consultant; member of OPUS; convenor for the Listening Post International Project; co-chair for Europe of the IPA Committee Psychoanalysis and the Mental Health Field.

Antonio Sama

Senior Lecturer

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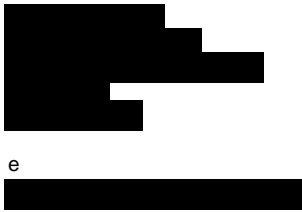
Professional Affiliations
Senior Lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University and assistant professor at the University of Calabria; member of OPUS; member of the Association of the Tavistock Institute; member of the Stewards Group of the Socio Technical System Roundtable (STS-RT).

Publications
Foresti G., Sama A. (2014). "Listening Post" in Quaglino G.P. (ed). *Formazione. Metodi*. Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore.
Ferruta A., Foresti G., Vigorelli M. (eds) (2012). *Le comunità terapeutiche: Psicotici, borderline, adolescenti, minori*. Milano : Raffaello Cortina Editore
Stapley L.F, Laimou E., Sama A. (2014). "OPUS Global Report", *Organisational and Social Dynamics*. Vol 14, n.1, pp. 178-202

Listening Post as Organisational Intervention:Reflections from GRADIOR

This paper will discuss the development of and the reflection on a method for an organisational intervention inspired by and based upon the methodology of the Listening Post. This method has been initially discussed by a group of Italian organisational consultants with a plurality of professional identities (scholarly practitioners, researchers and consultants) as an organisational intervention used in long term consultancy, as well as an initial intervention to address situations of institutional crisis. The method has been further developed by the two authors. This method has been called Gruppo di Ascolto Dinamiche Organizzative - GRADIOR (Listening Group on Organisational Dynamics). The word "gradior" is a Latin word meaning "to walk", "to advance".

The paper is based on a theoretical framework that includes contributions from Bion (e.g. the psychoanalytical approach to thinking; the alpha function and the dynamics container/contained; basic assumptions and working groups; +K and – K), from the group relations tradition and from Khaleelee and Miller's seminal work on "society as an intelligible field of study".

The historical, conceptual and practice debts of GRADIOR to the methodology of the Listening Post will be explored in detail.

The two authors will argue that GRADIOR enriches the portfolio of interventions available to organisational consultants and contributes to increase group and organisational learning and awareness of covert dynamics that impact on organisational life. The focus of this method is group thinking linked to organisational change (or lack of organisational change).

A case study on the application of GRADIOR in a social and health care organisation, based in the North of Italy and carried out in 2012 will be discussed. This will help the two authors in conceptualising the main similarities and differences between GRADIOR and Listening Post (e.g. group's membership; convenor's role; use of the report).

It will be argued that GRADIOR is similar to a "data gathering and feedback" intervention and can be used in the consultancy cycle in two main phases: as contribution to the diagnosis of the organisational issue(s) and as an intermediate phase to assess how the process of change is developing.

Mónica Velarde Lazarte

Director of TConsult
Socioanalyticpractice
President of Hope of the
Amazon Civil Association

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Professional Affiliations

Director T-Consult Socioanalytic
Practice, President Hope of the
Amazon Civil Association.
Research Associate London
School of Economics Multimedia
Lab Institute of Social
Psychology
occupation: Director of T-
Consult Socioanalytic Practice
and President of the Hope of the
Amazon Programme. Director of
the Group Relations Programme
of Esan Business School Health
Service Administration
Programme.

Publications

Them and Us: Finding creativity
through differences in the Hope
of the Amazon Program.
Keynote at Ak Rice Dialogues
2013

Liderando con propósito:
desarrollando el Perú- Programa
transformación en el Sector de
Energía y Minas publicado en
"Métodos Socioanalíticos para la
Gestión y el Cambio en
Organizaciones. Editorial
Universitaria

Leadership and Innovation in
Management and Consultancy
published in Group Relations
Conferences: Tradition,
Creativity and Succession,
Volumen 3 Edited By Aram,
Baxter and Nutkevitch Karnac
Books November 2012

Programa de metacognición
para facilitar los procesos de
creación literaria en niños de 3er
y 4to grado de primaria.
Publicado en Estrategias para
enseñar a pensar por Juana
Pinzas-Universidad de Lima
2002

Social Dynamics:
Developing Reflective Communities

Peruvian society lost around 70 000 people in a 20 year war against terrorism that took place from 1980 to 2000. As a country, we have failed to generate enough historical and collective memory to understand our country and its historical wounds and its impact in the development of fanatic thinking. Today it has lead among other problems to a new type of organization that promotes terrorist Shining Path ideology, through a movement operating under the name Movadef. This movement targets adolescents and young adults in situations of vulnerability. Historical relationships with native indigenous communities currently raise up significant problems with the understanding of the concept of citizenship linked to identity struggles among and across communities.

Our geopolitical position offers challenges for crisis containment. In the northern part of the tropical forest, in the region of the Amazon basin, effective interventions against the FARC in Colombia has moved 'narco-terrorist' activity towards Peruvian territory, making us today the first producer of cocaine chlorhydrate in the world. Human trafficking and work slavery organizations are threatening the wellbeing of indigenous communities together with the ecological sustainability of the area.

In this paper I will start with a geopolitical description of the Peruvian Amazon naming the main challenges in the region and the way they relate to globalized dynamics: ie. drugs consumption, antidrug policy, fanatic movements. I will build my analysis drawing on Max Hernandez's work about the ¨Margins of our historic memories¨, Dario Sor's work on fanaticism and Jonathan Lears' contribution to the ethics of cultural devastation. Finally, I will use two native indigenous artistic explorations of the concept of reflective citizenship and reflective communities to invite the audience to explore how the lack of borders in the region might impact in the Amazonian understanding of boundaries in order to hypothesize about different possible lines of intervention.

Ugo Merlone

Associate Professor of Psychology

Department of Psychology University of Torino

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Professional Affiliations
Associate of A.K.RICE Institute
Publications
Incentives in Organizations of Operating Systems: Can Economics and Psychology Coexist in Human Resources Management?. in *Behavioral issues in Operations Management: New trends in design, management, and methodologies.* Giannoccaro, I. (Ed.) Springer-Verlag, London. (2013).
Chaotic Dynamics in Organization Theory.with Dal Forno A. in *Global Analysis of Dynamic Models in Economics and Finance.* Bischi, G. I., Chiarella, C. & Sushko, I. (Eds.) Springer-Verlag, London. (2013).
Equil bria analysis in social dilemma games with Skinnerian agents. with Sandbank, D. R., & Szidarovszky, F., Mind & Society, (2013).
Nonlinear dynamics in work groups with Bion's basic assumptions. with Dal Forno A. Nonlinear Dynamics, Psychology, and Life Sciences, (2013).

John Wilkes

Leadership Coaching/Consulting

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Professional Affiliations
Associate of OPUS and ISPSO
Publications
Management, Leadership and Finding Trust in the Trustee in *Change on a Shoestring: Council Perspectives* ed McAra e-O & P(2009)

The Tragedy of Commons: Reflections from a Psychoanalytical Perspective

Game Theory has been used to explain social dilemmas; one of the most famous of these games, the Tragedy of Commons, about the grazing of sheep on common ground, shows what are the consequences of having each man (and yes they are always males in the theory) "locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit, in a world that is limited." Other situations resembling this scenario, depicted in Hardin (1968), are pollution and traffic, an example where clean air and empty roads are the respective commons. These situations are known as social dilemmas, and have been analysed by Economics Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom, who showed how difficult it proves to solve them (see for instance Dietsz et Al 2003). We suggest that in thinking about social dilemmas, we need to look below the surface of rational and irrational decision making, to deeper forces that are at play.

In the current political European consternation, after the economic crisis and politicians' inability to find coherent solutions which do not punish the poor and the disabled, we are facing several situations which are instances of social dilemmas. Growing votes gained by movements at the extreme edges of political activism, Nationalism or withdrawing from the EU can be considered as refusing to participate to a public good game.

Our aim is to explore what we perceive as a gap in thinking about social dilemmas by applying psychoanalytic theory to some aspects of these situations. According to Lynn and Oldenquist (1986), social psychologists have approached the problem of social dilemmas in terms of individual egoistic versus non-egoistic motives, suggesting that there has been an over concentration on the actions of the individual, rather than considering the cumulative effect of whole divergent groups of people. We want to explore social dilemmas as a large group phenomenon, considering the impact of the unconscious motivations of the whole group, particularly using the fifth basic assumption: me-ness (Lawrence et. al 1996). In addition, we wish to consider the issues of power and vulnerability and how they impact upon the actors playing different roles in these dilemmas.

Grace Loseby

Social and political scientist, researcher, policy developer and criminologist, Independent Academic Research Studies Formerly criminology lecturer at City of Birmingham University.

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Professional Affiliations

Restorative Justice Council UK, Member of Opus

Publications

(2009): Restorative Justice in a post-colonial society: the Gaccacca courts in post-genocidal Rwanda
(2011) In the Realisation of the trinity of Restorative Justice practice, how is the role of community conceived? A Case Study of West Midlands Police Force.
(2013) with Gavrielides
The Wind of Change: comparative study of RJ in S. Africa & UK.
(2014) GL with Ntziadima & Gavrielides Restorative Justice and Domestic Violence: A Critical Review.

Richard Morgan-Jones

Organisational consultant & coach, psychoanalytic psychotherapist and writer.

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Professional Affiliations

Opus, Board member of ISPSO. Restorative Justice Council UK. British Psychoanalytic Council. Training supervisor of the British Psychotherapy Foundation.

Publications

(2010) The Body of the Organisation and its Health.
(2011) The attempted murder of money and time: Addressing the Global Systemic Banking Crisis.
(2011). Towards a socioanalysis of money, finance and capitalism: beneath the surface of the financial industry.
(2013) What are we celebrating in the celebrity

The Group Effect: Restorative Justice and Group Relations Conferences compared and contrasted

Following a brief introductory film demonstrating Restorative Justice (RJ) at work, this presentation will describe the RJ Conference and its key principles involving the meeting of the trilogy of victim, perpetrator and community. This is compared to the formal legal framework of court justice that sidelines the experience of the victim. It explores the RJ conference experience and its professional preparation by qualified practitioners. We outline both foundation and current theories that inform its practice. These include first nation healing circles, the Catholic tradition of group sacrament of reconciliation and the contemporary perspectives of re-integrative shaming (Braithwaite et al 2001) and restorative punishment (Gavrielides 2013) in the context of the wider society. These will be discussed using Psychoanalytic and Socioanalytic approaches to deepen understanding of the limits, theory and practice of forgiveness, recognition and reintegrative shaming in the service of reducing reoffending and recidivism .

Our central theme is to explore the RJ conference as a systems event using concepts drawn from Group Relations Conferences (GRC). This will take up the themes of how individuals are mobilised by larger systems to act out particular roles on behalf of the system or society. This will deepen the concept of representation to describe the role of harmer and harmed and the place of suffering, silence and protest seeking containment and understanding. The restorative act that is a key feature of RJ conferences will be described as part of the output from the RJ conference and compared to the differentiated role transformation process that underpins application groups in a GR Conference. Furthermore, the RJ conference will be described as an example of resources and authority being provided at the edge of organisational life in the criminal justice system. This provides a rich example of what Boxer (2009, 2013) has described as key to leadership responding to asymmetrical demand. This involves engagement with emotional experience and facilitating a range of signifiers that can enhance the creative possibilities of innovation. This echoes delegation of authority to the fingertips of the organisation, where group relations consultants are resourced by the director to use their sensitivity in consulting to groups in the total system, at the boundary of their awareness of what they have come to represent for others.

We will beg the question about how community can be conceptualised and engaged in a post-modern age within RJ practice. In turn, this will raise the challenge to Group Relations conferences as temporary systems of postmodern community, in addressing the collective dynamics of power relations where shaming, hurt and harm also feature.

Dr. Lita Crociani-Windland

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Professional Affiliations
International Advisory Board for *Organisational and Social Dynamics*
OPUS
International Board Member
APCS (Association for Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society)
BSA (British Sociological Association)
Association for Psycho-Social Studies
SIEF (Societe` Internacional de Ethnologie e Folklore)

A toxic cocktail
Loss of trust, the politics of *Ressentiment* and the rise of UKIP

This paper aims to track the events that may have led to the rise of UKIP as a mainstream political party in the recent local UK elections and offer a theoretical elaboration that might contribute to an explanation of the phenomenon. This worrying trend towards the closing of borders and the rise of nationalism is analysed firstly by tracing a time line of scandals in public life and then at the hand of the Nietszchean notion of *Ressentiment,* also used by Scheler(1992), in conjunction with other theories of affect, including psychoanalytic understandings of such a dynamic. The resulting picture is one where the negative affect of those who feel hard done by, previously channelled in a poisonous, but stable way by the tabloid press, is now finding a political outlet in a populist party. This is viewed as a possible result of a loss of trust in most aspects of mainstream political and public life, following the MPs' expenses scandals, repeated scandals in relation to police conduct, the hacking scandal and particularly the revelations surrounding the hacking of Millie Dowler's phone by the News of the World. This last event is seen as particularly significant in producing a sense of betrayal among their readers (and this was the best selling UK paper), creating a vacuum for the expression and recycling of anger and resentment. Other scandals, combined with recession, had already fuelled and inflamed those sentiments and eroded what trust might exist in the political establishment, creating a vacuum of leadership and containment, which UKIP has been able to exploit and may still use to grow its power base.

Hanif Kureishi in a Guardian article (Brown 2014: 4) is reported as stating that 'immigrants have been transformed into a terrible fiction', like 'video –game impossible-to-kill zombies…a figure we can never quite digest or vomit'. This is in essence what Nietzsche's notion of *ressentiment* is about, it is about a re-sentiment, something that cannot be metabolized, but can perversely become enjoyable, as grudges can.

The paper builds on an article jointly published with Prof. Paul Hoggett by operationalising the frameworks and ideas developed therein in relation to recent UK political developments.

David Morgan

Consultant Psychotherapist

WBUK Whistleblowers Private Practice

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Publications

Violence Perversion and Delinquency Karnac

Whistleblowers: Moral Good Or Self Interest? The psychological dimensions of defying a perverse or corrupt authority?

The first comment from my first consultation with established and successful whistleblowers was, "Is this place,(my consulting room) bugged? "

Working with people with this sort of psychological issue in the past, I might see this sort of presentation as a projected form of aggression, externalised onto the outside world, where it then persecutes the originator, from outside in the minds of others or through delusions and hallucinations.

Through externalisation, the internal aggressive impulses, are thus reduced and put out to tender.

But with this group it does not seem delusional at all. Their narratives are compelling and feel genuine. Undoubtedly many of the people I see do exist in anxious states of mind and some must surely have had traces of these states before they disclosed. Indeed there is a sub group who are clearly trying to undermine every organisation that they belong to, even the consultation group. It is also true that they do feel watched, their level of trust is low and it is easy to write them all off as vexatious litigants and troublemakers. A very small minority may indeed be less than idealistically motivated.

Traumatising as it is to hear and seductive as it is to turn a blind eye, I have become convinced that the psychological profile of the whistleblower is a complex mix of an infantile wish to expose the parental authority on the one hand and the need for genuine people driven to behave morally in immoral organisations on the other.

While disclosure can be an altruistic act, it can all too easily be used for revenge and humiliation. At times, some whistleblowers are clearly eager to attack authorities through resentment; stalled careers, failed love affairs and no pay rise can see increases in some individual's willingness to shame or punish their communities, employers or families.

But also it is the organisation as an institution that seems to appear at times dedicated to the destruction of the moral individualist. Frequently the organization succeeds, which means that whistleblowers are attacked and unable to reconcile their actions and beliefs with the responses they receive from others. Many people in the consultation group who have disclosed might have reasonably expected some reward, praise and respect, often have to face total rejection and marginalisation.

This paper looks at the dynamics of working as a consultant to a whistleblowing organisation.

Luca Mingarelli

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John Diamond

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Professional Affiliations

Chair of NASS, on the editorial board of 'the international journal of therapeutic communities' in which he has published several papers, on the therapeutic communities accreditation panel at the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and an OPUS member.

The methodology " Learning from Action": an innovative Group Relations event for Therapeutic Communities and mental health workers

This paper comes from the need to reflect on and deepen the understanding of the *Learning from action* methodology and to continue the work started in a previous paper, written by R.Hinshelwood, E.Pedriali and L.D. Brunner also presented at an OPUS conference and published in the OPUS journal in 2010.

In this paper I will include and integrate some notes of J.Diamond with the point of view of a consultant and of Zsolt Zalka as a participant.

Learning from action is an innovative approach, following the Group Relations Conference model, aimed at exploring actions and daily activities as forms of non verbal and unconscious communication within mental health services.

This model of learning comes from the encounter and dialogue between the GRC and the Therapeutic Community culture.

The International Working Conference has a double task:

1.To develop an understanding of the "language of action"

2.To explore and increase the awareness of interpersonal, intergroup and organisational factors, both manifest and latent, which influence decision making processes and accountability.

This paper will also explore *learning from action* through the processes of the autonomous formation of three subgroups during the Working Conference, in charge of specific tasks related to the basic survival of the whole community: meal arrangement and preparation, maintainance and managment of communal areas and the organization of free time.

We will illustrate how practical aspects of daily living emerge with an important emotional load: taking or delegating responsibility; working for others; making decisions; confronting authority; leadership and followership; inclusion and exclusion with the related conflictual dynamics.

We will report some experiences and accounts from other participants' perspectives and points of view, exploring their working modalities, in and on behalf of the group, paying specific attention to the *non verbal communication conveyed through actions.*

We will also begin to explore analogies, similarities and differences between Therapeutic Community, GRC and LFA, investigating the potential meaning and impact of this partcular type of Working Conference on improving work practice within mental health communities and services.

Sandra G. L. Schruijer PhD

Professor of Organization Science

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Professional Affiliations

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Experiencing and dealing with the psychodynamics of interacting work and family systems, around the care of an elderly family member residing in a nursing home

My personal experiences regarding the care for my elderly mother in a nursing home form the basis of this paper. I want to present and discuss the emotional experiences and organizational difficulties when helping an elderly lady to live with dignity during the final phase of her life. As a daughter I am part of the care system organized around her by the nursing home, within the context of a larger institution and of society. I am also a member of the family system that not only involves my mother but my siblings too, with all the accompanying dynamics. This paper focuses on the system psychodynamics that characterize the interactions within and between the care system and the family system, and situates these in a larger social context.

The well-known insights provided by Isabel Menzies-Lyth (1959) are a constant source of insight and comfort when trying to deal with the sometimes bizarre and surreal care situations and activities. Caring for the elderly, who are needy and many of whom are suffering from cognitive impairment with concomitant behavioural changes, is emotionally demanding. Anxieties are dealt with through social defences that are to be found in irrational routines and procedures. It keeps amazing me how individual carers can be kind and caring, while organized care often is messy and at times blatantly insufficient. To make matters worse, elderly care has been suffering from cutbacks for many years and the Dutch healthcare is currently in the middle of major change which puts a lot of extra stress on an already vulnerable system.

The care for an ailing and needy mother also needs to be put in a family context. Providing emotional and practical assistance to an elderly person that is suffering from dementia is demanding; when that person is one's mother, ever present and never resolved mother-dynamics are stirred up which create more stresses and strains. Further, the family system is likely to involve other family members too, in my case siblings. The care for one's mother hugely impacts sibling relationships, undoubtedly triggering and reinforcing older patterns of sibling rivalry and other dynamics.

Sources for my analyses pertain to my own experiences, feelings and thoughts as a daughter, sister, carer and member of the nursing home's client council. Another source consists of the notes in my mother's care record, created and administered by the care staff with occasional comments from me in it. I also kept track of emails that I have exchanged with the care staff. Finally, the minutes of the client council and other documents that are discussed within that context, may shed some light on the dynamics of the home itself, the larger institution and the wider context.

Carlos Sapochnik

Researcher and Organizational Consultant; Staff and Director of group relations conferences, UK and abroad; Visiting Tutor, Tavistock & Portman NHS Foundation Trust; PhD candidate, Department of English and Comparative Literature, Goldsmiths College, University of London

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Professional Affiliations

Member International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations; Associate Member OPUS

Publications

(2003) Corruption: Oedipal configuration as social mechanism. *Organizational and Social Dynamics* 3 (2): 177–190
(2005) Martial Arts – enactment of aggression or integrative space? *Psychodynamic Practice Journal* 11 (4): 451–458
(2010) The myth of creativity at work. Annual Symposium of the International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations (ISPSO). Elsinore, Denmark
(2013) Drawing below the surface – Eliciting tacit knowledge in social science research. *Tracey Journal / Drawing Knowledge*. Loughborough University

Group relations as ritual (from seduction to translation)

Group relations conferences in the Tavistock tradition make use of psychoanalytic and systemic perspectives to bring into focus group dynamics around boundaries, roles, task and authority, assisting the membership to move from fragmentation to integration, considering possible applications of the learning to the individual's professional life. The main (and recurrent) surprise – even for those with experience of psychoanalytic therapies and theories – is the recognition of the manifestations of the unconscious in individuals and groups. The process is performative and, in spite of commonalities, no two conferences are ever alike – as epitomized by a familiar statement at an opening plenary: 'though staff have attended many conferences before, neither participants nor staff know what is going to happen in this particular conference'. This may be factual, but it also functions as a strategy of ritual seduction.

Ritual may be understood as a socially approved practice, or an enactment at the level of a cult. Group relations have ritual features – just like every human activity – yet a distinction can be made between dynamics that need to be engaged with through ritual so that anxiety is purposely avoided; and those that utilize ritualization to assist the potential of being present in the experience, where ritual may hold a playful or solemn containing function.

The paper considers how ritual behaviour is in evidence; the different functions it may serve towards attaining a conference's generic and specific objectives, such as the translation of emotions into representations of reality, and a potential exploration (both feared and desired) of sexuality and the death drive. It then considers how conscious meta-learning strategies and unconscious desire impact on the design of a conference for the construction of a ritualized experience.

The argument draws from a psychoanalytic understanding of the frame, exploring the nature and need for ritual practices, and how varied practices are determined by contextual ethics and aesthetics. It considers issues of tradition, leaders as shamanic figures, and the group relations conference as a particular type of performance with the purpose of finding a translation for (and recognition of) socially ambivalent feelings – towards transformation and growth.

Brian Melaugh

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Change - it's an Emotional Game -the Role of Leadership in Containing the Emotions of Change in Residential Child Care in Ireland.

The purpose of the paper is to present findings from the author's doctoral research, based on a case study approach, exploring how leaders of residential child care organisations in Ireland contain emotions evoked by organisational change. The paper will argue that models of change management that reflect the ideology of managerialism imposed on the field of residential child care are not suitable. As such models do not reflect the emotional and value laden nature of residential child care, there is a need to develop a body of organisational theory that reflects the relational culture of this system (Ward, 2009). This is essential because residential child care in Ireland is experiencing significant change. These changes include questions about the cost and value of residential child care. In Ireland the main change event is the significant reduction in funding to residential child care as the Irish State endeavours to manage the recession by implementing a programme of austerity. Also as residential leaders play a key role in leading change, there is a need to ensure that theory reflects the emotional work of leading change. The following emerged from the study:

- The main change event was the impact of austerity which challenged the survival of the unit (Liffey View) observed.
- The capacity of the leadership system to contain emotion, coupled with investment in structures to support the team, meant that the unit adapted to the change.
- Emotions of Trust, Hope and Passion can mobilise teams to engage with change.
- Psychodynamic thinking of emotional containment can make a valuable contribution to the task of leading change in residential child care.
- Psychodynamic theory, because of its ability to reflect the emotional and relational nature of residential care, can offer an alternative framework to technocratic models of change.

The paper also presents a model (synthesis of emotional containment and concepts from organisational theory) to support the emotional work of leading change in residential child care.

Finally the paper calls for further research into role of emotional containment in the management of change and the model that emerged from the research.

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Parenting calls forth 'childing': an examination of modern childhoods and children's emotional labour

This paper is an exploratory attempt to explore and make sense of the emotional labour children are now required to perform in family life. My contention (following Hogberg, 2010) is that most modern family configurations in the global north require children to perform three main types of emotion-work.

1. Confirming the love relationship between the parents (being the jewel in the crown of the special relationship that is the heterosexual union)
2. " Keeping the hearth fire burning" and the emotional work needed in holding the family together and mediating between parents
3. Providing parents with unique, life-long, intimate relationships.

I also suggest and explore a fourth type of emotion work typical of modern childhood – the reassurance children are required to provide to anxious parents that they are indeed 'perfect' children, with 'perfect' parents who have provided 'perfect' childhoods. Children have implicit or even explicit emotional targets: failure to meet these targets is both a source of parental shame and discomfort and a source of endless expert intervention.

When we think about 'parenting' we do not consider its missing relational term or twin, something I call 'childing'. That we do not even have a proper word for it is itself richly instructional. A main feature of 'childing' is the providence of frequent demonstration of satisfaction, gratitude, pleasure and reassurance.

All of this adds up to an uncomfortable acknowledgement that children, who are in fantasy positioned outside the rational calculus of capitalist modernity are subject to commodified and alienating relationships in which they are required to provide 'services' and 'value for money'. To put it more delicately, their approval and approbation is longed for by parents. ("I love you:", "No, I love you more"). Whatever their official status as 'sacred objects' they are expected to provide emotional services in modern family life and the cost of not doing so is reflected in the increasing intolerance of non-perfection in children and attempts to 'fix' them via professionalised parenting or expert intervention.

Christopher Scanlon

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Psychoanalytic Study of Society
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'Psychoanalysis, Culture and
Society' and 'Free Associations'.*

Publications
Scanlon, C. (in press 2014) On
the perversity of *imagined*
psychological solutions to very
real social problems of
unemployment (*work-lessness*)
and social exclusion (*worth-
lessness)*: a group-analytic
critique, *Group Analysis,*
Cornes, M., Manthorpe, J.,
Hennessey, C., Anderson, S.,
Clark, M. and **Scanlon, C.**
(2014) Not Just a Talking Shop:
practitioner perspectives on how
communities of practice work to
improve outcomes for people
experiencing multiple exclusion
homelessness, *Journal of
Interprofessional Care,* Advance
Online publication DOI
10.3109/13561820.2014.917406
Scanlon, C. and Adlam, J.
(2013) Reflexive Violence.
*Psychoanalysis, Culture and
Society,* Vol. 18, 3, 223–241
Scanlon, C. and Adlam, J.
(2013) On knowing your place
and minding your own business:
perverse solutions to the
imagined problems of social
exclusion, (Special Edition on
Psychosocial perspectives).
Ethics and Social Welfare, 7, 2,
170-183

Perverse solutions, work-lessness, worth-lessness and *social exclusion* in the Welfare State in the UK

This presentation will examine the psycho-social consequences of a range of policies, realised through the welfare state, with the intention of achieving social inclusion by *Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)* for the un(der)employed and the workless. The critique presented is that these Social Policy initiatives establish a boundary between domains of *inclusion* and *exclusion,* which perversely maintains the very problem such policies are designed to solve. I will suggest that the framing of the *depressing* consequences of un(der)employment and workless-ness as a 'psychological' problem ascribes to the de(op)pressed *non-worker* a certain social role and a particular kind of psychological identity and then seeks to locate the *problem* of social exclusion (and the depression associated with it) in this identity.

I will also explore the ways in which we, as a society, are invited to live in a split world and to hold two contradictory conceptualisations about *un(der)employment and worklessness*. On the one hand *we seem* to know that it is a consequence of the structural failures of national and international economic policies, yet at the same time are invited to *believe* that it is also a result of 'individual psychological failure'. In these ways a very real psycho-social 'anxiety and depression' that *should* be talked about*,* takes the place of a very real socio-economic 'anxiety and depression' which *must not be talked about.* Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (and other related 'welfare to work') initiatives are deployed as a means of achieving this silencing.

Larry Hirschhorn

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Professional Affiliations

ISPSO, Fellow, Philadelphia Center of Pyschoanalysis

Publications

"The Financial Crisis: The Dynamics of Imagination and Authority in a Post-Industrial World," in, *Towards a Socioanalysis of Money, Finance and Capitalism,* Susan Long and Burkard Sievers, eds., Routledge, 2012.

"Backcasting: A Systematic Method for Creating a Picture of the Future and How to Get There," *OD practitioner*, Fall 2007, Volume 39, No. 4, pp.16-21. Reprinted in *Handbook for Strategic OD*, John Vogelsgang, 2012.

"The Fall of Howell Raines: A Study in the Moralization of Organizational Life," *Consulting Psychology Journal*, Sep 2007, 155-174.

"The Power of Moral purpose: Sandler O'Neill and partners in the Aftermath of September 11, 2001," with Steven Freeman and Mark Maltz, *Organizational Development Journal*, Winter 2004, pp. 69-81.

Beyond BART (boundary, authority, role and task): Creative Work and the Developmental Project.

This paper argues that our inherited BART framework for understanding organizations is not sufficient for understanding groups engaged in creative undertakings. I propose the concept of a "*developmental project*," as a way to understand the lived experience of people doing creative work and the kinds of structures they use to coordinate their efforts and hold each other accountable. I contrast the Developmental Project (DP) with what I call the Regular Work Organization (RWO) in the following way:

THE RWO	THE DP
Continuity	Disruption
Routine risks	Existential risks
Continuous value creation	Moment of truth in value creation
The work	The boundary object
The division of labour	The division of insight
Management and authority tightly coupled	Management and authority loosely coupled

The paper is based on four published case studies of developmental projects and one consultation case of a group of computer scientists and social scientists, in a university that came together to create a computer model of "Forced Migration." I was both a participant observer in the project and an advisor to the project manager. The purpose of the model was to help relief agencies get advance warning of where socio-political violence might occur, and how households and families might respond to a menacing context.

The paper examines how the DP's posited features all played a role in organizing the experience of the participants in the research group. The paper ends with a discussion of how groups cope with, or defend against, existential risk, a salient feature of developmental projects.

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Publications

Boxer, P. J. (2013). Anxiety and innovation: working with the beyond of our double subjection. Colloquium on Revisiting 'Unconscious Defences against Anxiety', Oxford, UK.
Hoggett, P. (2006). "Conflict, ambivalence, and the contested purpose of public organisations." Human Relations **59**(2): 175-194.
Lacan, J. (1992 [1959-1960]). The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis. London, Tavistock/Routledge.
Lacan, J. (2014[2004]). Anxiety: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book X 1962-1963. Cambridge, UK, polity.
Long, S. (2006). "Organizational Defenses Against Anxiety: What Has Happened Since the 1995 Jaques Paper?" International Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies **3**(4): 279-295.
Trist, E. (1977). "A Concept of Organizational Ecology." Australian Journal of Management **2**(2): 161-176.

The Governance of Specialist Care: a Question of Ethics?

This paper describes a two-year intervention within an organization providing residential care for men and women with mental health disabilities. This intervention, in support of the CEO and senior management team, took place during the mid 90's when the UK Government was engaged in de-institutionalisation, making the transition to Community Care and instituting internal market reforms. The intervention itself was concerned with supporting innovations in the way the work of the organization supported the lives of its residents. These innovations were necessary to the continuing viability of the organisation as a specialist care organisation.

The paper is written from the perspective of 20 years later, making it possible to contrast the hopes and aspirations of both the consultants and the client at the time of the intervention, with what actually happened to the organisation subsequently. The paper describes the way the authorisation of the consultants was drawn from the consulting approach. It describes the orthogonality that this demanded of the consultants, through which underlying dilemmas could be surfaced about the nature of the client system's work. Three issues emerged from the intervention that are addressed by the paper: firstly, the nature and complexity of the client system in its networked environment and the extent of the innovation that this demanded (Trist 1977); secondly, the nature of the consulting approach involved in responding to this demand; and thirdly, the implications this approach had for the governance of the client system (Hoggett 2006).

From the perspective of 20 years later, it is not a surprise that the social defences against anxiety won out over the desire for innovation (Long 2006). This gives rise to a fourth issue however: what change in the relationship to the unconscious was being expected of the governance of the client system; what kind of courage did this demand; and what were the unconscious dynamics underlying the Board's refusal to innovate? (Boxer 2013) The paper concludes by considering the nature of orthogonality and the change in the relationship to the unconscious that this demanded of the governance of the client system, a change that involved an ethics that could move from 'defending against anxiety' to 'being true to desire' (Lacan 1992 [1959-1960]; Lacan 2014[2004]). The paper concludes by considering the implications these ethics have for a different kind of experiential event, that can explore the existential impact of such changes, so necessary in networked environments.

Karen Izod

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Professional Affiliations
KIzod Consulting: Consultancy
in Organisational Change and
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Visiting Research Fellow,
Faculty of Health and Applied
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Tavistock Institute; Visiting
Tutor, Henley Business School;
Member of Opus.

Publications

Izod, K. & Whittle, S.R. (2014)
*Resource-ful Consulting:
Working with your Presence and
Identity in Consulting to Change*.
Karnac: London

Izod, K. (2013) 'Too close for
comfort: Attending to boundaries
in Associate Relationships' Eds,
Whittle, S. and Stevens, R.
(2013) *Changing Organisations
from Within: Roles, Risks and
Consultancy Relationships.*
Gower

Izod, K. (2012) 'Elemental': a
creative non-fiction article on
attachment to landscape. In
Attachment: New Directions in
Psychotherapy and Relational
Psychoanalysis. Vol 6:3
November 2012

Whittle, S & Izod, K, (2009) Eds.
Mind-ful Consulting. Karnac:
London.

Izod, K. (2009) The Relational
Turn, implications for
organisations and groups. In
*Social Relations, and Object
Relations*, Eds Clarke, S., Hahn,
H. and Hoggett, P. Karnac:
London

Attachment to Place: Identity, Representation and Equivalent Realities

This seminar will explore our relatedness to place - the physical world of cities and landscapes. I will consider how places resonate in our inner worlds, leaving sense impressions which evoke different aspects of our identities. I will offer some ideas about how relatedness to place makes its way into how we think and feel about taking up roles, offering some perspectives on the nature of representation, whether that be of our organizations, as in some kind of brand representation, or in communities.

This is a mixed genre presentation, illustrating ideas in formation and their origins in attachment theories (Bartholomew & Horowitz 1991) and the dynamics of identity construction (Izod & Whittle 2014). That said, this is primarily an ideas lead session illustrated with memoir and photographs. It is a work in progress and I welcome your comments on things that I am aware of, and those that I am not.

Place has become a 'crowded' concept, occupied by social scientists, geographers, environmentalists and artists. I want to add the psycho-social to this mix. Landscape affects mood: we can make use of our environments as containing factors when faced with insecurity, and we can encounter emotional upheaval when our environments are threatened.

I will offer an idea that taking up roles as citizens and in working life, can make use of a heightened awareness of place through a construct of 'equivalent realities'. (Harris 2010.) This term, used to illustrate how experience is expressed in art form, offers a means of thinking about how relatedness to place resonates in our inner worlds and how we take up representational roles.

This is a participative session: **please bring a photograph (hard copy or on your phone/iPad) of a place that has meaning for you**, and come willing to explore your experiences with others.

Daphna Bahat

Clinical Psychologist, Certified Teacher for Oriental Dance, Organisational consultant

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Professional Affiliations

OFEK, Chairwoman, Privet Practice.

Publications

Bahat, D. (2012) A Church with no Followers: a Split of Knowledge and Power in the Group Relations Community. In: Aram, E., Baxter, B. & Nutkevitch, A. (eds.) *Group Relations Conferences – Tradition, Creativity and Succession in the Group Relations Network.* 179-185. Karnac.

Bahat, D. and Bonwitt, G. (2010) The shelter as a metaphor. In: Cohen et al. (eds.) *Land of Shelter – Catalogue of an Exhibition in Tel Aviv University Gallery.* pp. 94 – 100.

Bahat, D and Bonwitt, G. (2007) Not Everything is Black and White: Modified Group Relations Conference with Immigrants of Ethiopian Descent. A presentation for the *OPUS conference 2007* and for the *4th EFPP Group Section Conference 2009.* (a Hebrew modified version was Published in Kav OFEK, called: Who knows whether Abraham wasn't Black).

So What Do Women Want?
or: The inner authority to be a woman
Some dynamics of transference and counter-transference in groups for the empowerment of women through Belly Dance

"All my life I have suffered from low self-esteem. If I could have changed something in myself, I would have changed everything in the body. And also the nose. The ugliest things about me are my palms and feet."
(Israel beauty queen for 2001)

Over the past decade, the presenter has lead groups for women using a model she developed based on Belly Dance (Oriental Dance) and other expressive techniques, for the purpose of working through the experience of being a woman, mainly through experience of the body.
The method is semi-structured; the presenter both teaches the dance and offers metaphors and exercises with which the participants can work in the presence of the group and with the group.

The raison d'etre of these groups is related to several themes in the life cycle and development of women, among them: alienation from the body and preoccupation with it, ambivalence towards sensuality and sexuality, the relation to the mother and to her body, the relation with "womanhood", socialization within the power distribution between genders, and other issues.

The presentation will describe the uniqueness of Belly Dance for the feminine body (including a short demonstration). It will address issues mainly concerning the relation to the body among women, and the way these issues are manifested during the work. The presentation will focus on the transference to the presenter as the facilitator of the group and the transference to her body, both understood as representing the internalized relation with the mother's, and with one's own body. Through projective identification the facilitator works through her counter-transference toward enhancing the work of the group as a whole and of individuals in the group.

The presentation is expected to shed light both on issues concerning femininity and on the possibility of thinking and working with psychoanalytic-systemic theory and method in a semi-structured group.

Robert French

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Professional Affiliations

Visiting Research Fellow, Bristol Business School, UWE

Publications

French, R. and Simpson, P. (2014) *Attention, Cooperation, Purpose: An Approach to Working in Groups Using Insights from Wilfred Bion*. London: Karnac.

French, R. and Simpson, P. (2010) The 'work group': Redressing the balance in Bion's *Experiences in Groups. Human Relations*, 63(12) 1859–1878.

Simpson, P., French, R. and Harvey, C.E. (2002) Leadership and negative capability. *Human Relations*, 55(10), 1209-1226.

French, R. and Simpson, P. (2003) Learning at the edges between knowing and not-knowing, in R. Lipgar and M. Pines (eds) *Building on Bion: Branches – Contemporary Developments and Applications of Bion's Contributions to Theory and Practice*. London: Jessica Kingsley, 182-203.

French, R. and Vince, R. (eds) (1999) *Group Relations, Management and Organization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

"Men have become the tools of their tools." (Thoreau) "Tool-making": a form of interaction to add to dependence, fight/ flight and pairing?

The speculations in this paper build on earlier work with Bion's ideas (French and Simpson, 2010; 2014). Groups undoubtedly demonstrate two mentalities: "basic-assumption" and "work". They also interact through basic human patterns of behaviour: fight-flight, dependence and pairing. However, these three forms of interaction are not "*the basic assumptions*", because they can reflect work mentality just as much as basic-assumption mentality: they "can all be Work." (Menzies-Lyth, 2002: 29)

The question here is whether *tool-use* (or "technique") might be a further form of interaction on a par with the three Bion identified. Was he suggesting this when he wrote, "Organization and structure are weapons of the work group" (Bion, 1961: 170), or when he indicated the other side – that structures can also be weapons of basic-assumption mentality, as when "An organization becomes hard and inanimate like this table"? "The shell that protects also kills." (Bion, 1976: 277, 284)

The tentative term "tool" has a wide range of applications: computers, email, prisons, transportation systems, agendas, roles... – "all rationally designed devices, be they artefacts or rules, codes or operators" (Illich, 1973: 20). If there is anything in this, then a tool too, like fight-flight, dependence and pairing, is a form of interaction that will at times support work-group mentality, as its "weapons", but will equally be used by a group in basic-assumption mentality to undermine or replace its agreed common purpose.