

How do institutions dream

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Abstract

The author part of the box after that Freud made his topical and thanks to their rewriting topological space, he could understand that, beyond the physiological and psychological need of sleep, even the institutional groups need space for the self-representation conflicts which are crossed. These spaces, to operate according to the principles of representability dream, must have sufficient quality transformational. Mutations topological he has shown, indicate that, in institutions, we are in the presence of a genuine psychic activity group that meets the constraints that disturb (unheimlich) and dissimulate (verheimlichen).

Key-words: institution, representability, delinquent, adolescents, group, psychoanalytic, psychodrama, topical, transference

I'll introduce my subject by the way of three quotations:

Freud 1900:

I have noticed deep-seated analogies between dream and social censorship, especially concealment.

Dreams are the royal road which leads to the unconscious

D. Anzieu 1975:

we came in a group as we came in a dream

The superimposing of these three quotations leads us to a question: is the group a royal road to the unconscious?

An experience of psychoanalytic psychodrama with antisocial adolescents in an institution managed by an organisation controlled by the ministry of Justice, leads me to this hypothesis:

Under specific conditions, in an institution, a psychoanalytic (psychodrama) group is linked to the institutional life as the dream is linked to the individual subject

1. The working out of the setting

1.1. conditions of representability of the setting

With the contribution of the teaching staff, I created a setting of psychoanalytic psychodrama in an adolescent community centre.

1° This setting creates the conditions for the transformation of the structural value of the act. Acting faced with its symbolic valence through the psychodrama setting is no more a drive motion but becomes a figuration, a representation.

2° the group delimitation of the setting provides a psychological field that enables the intrapsychical, intersubjective, transsubjective stakes to come on stage through the transference figuration on group stage. The group provides an intermediate configuration between intrapsychical stakes and representability social constraints. This symbolic setting respects the figuration field of the antisocial symptom.

Antisocial people are not in line with a transference dynamic which condensed transference figurations in the space of the Cure. Antisocial people actualise a transference dynamic which diffracts on peripheral figures. The group can bear this lateralisation of the transference process and it enables us to treat the lateral transference in the field of the therapeutic setting. The group psychotherapy respects the way by which antisocial people joint the psychoanalytic process to the setting. It contains the destructiveness by binding it with the containing, delimiting, transitional and symbolic functions of the psychoanalytic psychodrama setting. It limits the destructive expansion in the community centre and in the social range. The principle of the symbolic reversal of drive transference destiny which is present in every psychoanalytical setting, is much more efficient because he works with diffracted drive motions.

1.2. Conditions of possibility of the setting

In order to make the reversal operative, it is useful to do a preliminary work with the nursing or teaching staff.

This setting is structured by two drive renunciations:

1° One renunciation which is internal to the psychoanalytic field

this renunciation is imposed by:

psychoanalytic setting rules

the institutional setting

the psychic dynamic of the institution (a return rule, for example, is often necessary in this setting)

2° One renunciation which is external to the psychoanalytic field

During a given space-time the personal , the manager etc. had to give up some privileges. They cannot enter this space otherwise this will be an intrusion of the psychodrama setting. They look after the non-intrusion of this space by non-participating adolescents.

This double renunciation, which is implicit during psychoanalytic treatment in a private office, creates the conditions that enables the reversal of the drive destiny.

The staff needs a sufficient self-representation of the rules that enables the therapeutic efficiency of the psychodrama setting.

In an institution, in order to maintain a working environment, every psychoanalytic treatment, requires that the psychoanalyst does not expel nursing or education staff from the working out of the setting. He has to create with them a specific interface governing the responsibility of every one regarding the therapeutic setting and the institutional setting.

If we do like this:

the institutional staff is benevolent enough regarding the psychoanalytic setting.

The psychoanalyst must watch over the operativeness of this double renunciation: it is the "sine qua non" condition to keep the interface operative.

This is a condition of the institutional dream.

2. Topic and dynamic of the psychic institutional apparatus

The psychodrama group takes place in a room which houses different activities according to the time of the day and the day of the week.

During the day: this room is quite unoccupied except by adolescents breaking up their contract with the teaching staff who should be elsewhere.

Before dinner: if adolescents wish to be helped by teachers for special needs, they come into this room after dinner: this room was used as a T.V. room during the first four years in the beginning of psychodrama

one day a week it was a psychodrama room

one day every fifteen days it was a picture-club room

one day every fifteen days it was an self-expression through movement room

one evening every six weeks there was an institutional meeting (the whole teaching staff and all the adolescents).

this room is not opened every time to every body. If someone wish to stay in, he must respect the rule of the activity going on in this room. In psychic terms, the subject has to integrate the psychic dynamic which vectorizes this place during this time. Most of the institutions have this kind of space, very often they are not aware of its psychic function.

This space is a transformational space of self-representation whose topologic modifications indicate the dynamic modifications into the institutional psychic topic according to the activities of the institution.

2.1.1. The psychic institution apparatus awakened

This place is configured as a show room the group works following a process of topic or topologic links which is well known by us: it's the graphic of the first psychic topic as the one drawn by S. Freud in the "dream interpretation".

The first row is dependant of the show on the screen but unstable: some adolescents being late rush here when the room is full of people in the room. Lateral links between adolescents are non-existent or conflictual.

The second row is dependant on the show, often disturbed by the third one.

In the third and the fourth rows there are many comments, lateral links between adolescents are intensive. They are often reprimanded especially by those dependant on the show.

The fifth and last row is split. Those next to the door are very unstable with frequent coming and going (motor function). The opposite part is to all appearances very quiet but in fact very restless. Here, in the dark there are many suspect transactions.

From a formal point of view this progress is not different of the vectorisation of the individual psychic apparatus described by S. Freud in the "dream interpretation". The process of the perceptions in the psychic institutional apparatus operates by associations by contiguity and by similarity.

2.1.2. The psychic institutional apparatus reflecting and thinking

During a general meeting, the chairs are placed in a circle with a way to the door. The manager sits in front of the door to survey what happens. If we consider this lay out, we see that it's a repressing topologic structure. Lateral links between subjects are reduced to a single contiguity between neighbours. Private speaking can be heard by every one. One speaks to every one, or one must keep quiet (to be repressed). This repressing structure looks like a psychic apparatus reflecting or thinking: it may repressed every too intense affects or relations especially between adolescents. It works on very little affect intensity. It manages a hierarchic scale of value agencied by the manager function of super-ego ideal.

2.1.3. Psychic apparatus dreaming: the psychodrama

During the four first years, the setting up of the psychodrama group was done in the room, laid-out as a show room. During preliminary time when the room was arranged like a general institution meeting. After preliminary time, adolescents needed a new laying out because of the psychic work. The first two rows were kept in place and the three other ones were put in three quarter circle opener toward the wall of the door. This is a compromise formation between a general meeting based on a co-repression and psychic apparatus arrangement of the show room. The double rows kept seems to be a topologisation of a ego function: a work of compromise. The psychodrama stage takes the topologic place of the rows which had a function of associating and linking the perceptions considered as stranger to the group. We have get here the topological translation of the formal regression during the dream when the psychic apparatus produces the auto-representation of subject's desire from his or her memory traces and intra-psychic representations. It's from this psychic localisation that psychodrama produces it's effect of onireic representability: we assist to the production of what I name an "obscenalisation" which functions by topic transference.

3. An institutional dream

This function of institutional dream is set aside for keeping the psychic links, as we will see it working during institutional crisis. Because of a conflict with the ministry

of justice the association threatened to close the institution. It was strictly forbidden to talk with adolescents about this threat.

After one year of preliminary working-through, the adolescents began to work out their intra-psychic and inter-subjective stakes which forced them to constrain their delinquent behaviours. Every week, more adolescents came to take part to the psychodrama. They were so many that gradually the seats of the two first rows must be included in the circle of the psychodrama stage. One month before the official decision of the association, every adolescent came to take part in the psychodrama. They stage a scene where somebody was brought to trial in a circuit court. "A crime without name" was judged. This represent the figure of "ignominy" which initialises the antisocial destiny. During this scene were condensed a primal element: this group of delinquent girls existed now by a decision of the justice court. They were asserting the identification function of this primal decision. They were sharing between them their doubts, conflicts, taboos which have prevailed their personal birth. Every one and each scene were in fact present or represented on the scene.

The oldest ones were playing the ego function of judges, the youngest one were playing the super-ego function of the jury, the other ones were representing the audience. They used the (symbolic) function of the court to support the topologic transference of a psychic topic to carry out by an imaginary way their desire: to keep the community centre open. They paid this imaginary carrying out by their conviction for an ignominious crime (this crime is typical of the transgenerational taboo with which they had been so frequently been confronted.).

The conflict between ministry of justice and the association threatens the external side of the interface. The internal structure of the psychic topic becomes dissociated from the external side. If we superpose the envelope of the second Freudian topic with the space of the room, if we superpose the structure of the court with the internal structure, we can see that the internal seems have turned inside the envelope: a quarter circle rotation. I showed besides that is an apparatus structure organised in a psychopathic way. This quarter circle rotation is a response to a depriving state.

We are in a position where the psychic apparatus produces the dream which protects it's psychic structure and it's sleep (self-preservation). The theme of the history underlines how they include unconsciously the knowledge, that the institution was threatened. As every adolescent was present during this session, the institutional staff could make them realise of the valence of this event. During the playing, the acquittal of the accused carry out in an imaginary way the each person desire to live as well as a desire for the survival for the institution in the face of curses. The institutional dream, localised in a space of topic and formal regression allowed the restoration of an enough narcissism in an institution threatened by the death conflict between official parents. The staff took resolutions and asked to meet the official to present it's specific educational and therapeutic methods. By this initiative the staff saved the institution. The psychodrama had carried out it's function of protection of the psychic institutional apparatus.

3. Conclusion

From this experience, with the successive sketches that S. Freud made of the topics and their translation in the group space, I could understand that beyond the physiologic necessity and the psychic necessity of the dream, institutional groups need spaces of self-representation of their psychic conflicts. These spaces must have sufficient transformational properties to enable a work following the principles of onireic representability. Topological mutations show how we are witnesses of an authentic group psychic activity which follows constraints which are especially strangely familiar to us (Unheimlich) and that we conceal (verheimlichen) to us. We often fail to recognise these topical transferences, as we want to fail to recognize the meaning of our dreams especially when they are uncanny familiar with desires and drives that we want repress, deny or foreclose. Isn't it the topic transference which produces our dreams? Isn't it the reason why they are the royal road to the unconscious? The dream in our actual life gives a screen to the chronic transferences of our infantile desires, traumas. These chronic transferences are exactly those which are condensed in the space of the psychoanalytic treatment and are articulated on the person of the psychoanalyst. This dialectic between topic and chronic transference lead us to the very heart of the resistance, the structural knot of the transference.

Isn't it the structural reason of this strange similarity between the censorship during a dream and the censorship during the social life, structural container of these topic transferences which implies the most archaic part of our ego: our non-ego as described by J. Bleger.

Freud probably indicated us the way by changing his topics and the sketch of his topics. The first topic sketches describe a psychic apparatus in the state of dreaming, or in a state of vectored waking as you can observe it in this lecture hall for example. The second topic and its different sketches put on stage a psychic apparatus in state of reflecting, thinking, but especially in the situation of the cure: overdetermination of the unconscious effects of the Id and of the superego forcing the ego to make manifest what it represses. This is based on a transformation from the conception of the unconscious as not-conscious to a conception of the unconscious as a specific psychic field governed, processes, specific mechanisms and configurations. I could understand this development of Freud's thought by the transformations that the group imposes to the subject's individual psychism. It is not by chance if this change is contemporary with the coming back of the group and the crowd in the Freudian thought.

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