

Psychoanalytic Groups and Musical Groups: an Investigation on the Possible Common Prospects

Gregorio Simonelli

Abstract

This paper would like to bridge two realities, music and group psychoanalysis and investigate some of the dynamics that occur in groups of musicians, with the purpose of analyzing them, having as reference schools of thought that studied group psychoanalysis. Key-words are groupal associative chains related with the free improvisations in the jam sessions, mirror effect and resonance, analyzed in two places, the sessions atmosphere or back tone, the medium and the effects of the primitive mentality and of the basic assumptions, comparing W.R. Bion and C. Neri's description with music atmosphere.

Key-words: resonance, music, medium, primitive mentality, basic assumptions.

People

Let's imagine it's afternoon, some people are together for the first time in a psychotherapist's study for an experience of group analysis; among these we can individuate different "types": the uncertain, the one that heard that the experience was interesting, the one who is afraid or the one who is sure not to be afraid, the one who is curious and so on. In expectation of the analyst the people chat, they introduce to one another, someone remains silent, the air resounds with a kaleidoscope of words that are waiting to be spoken and that will save all present people from a silence which is still too intimate. Everyone is there driven by a motivation or at least because there was something which was really too heavy to be digested by themselves and everyone, in time, will have the opportunity to express himself, to give breath to his voice, to his instrument.

At the same time, in another area of Rome, a group of young musicians get together for the first time for an official rehearsal. Among these we can see types which are: sure of themselves more or less, shy, or "too open", ready to remove the unavoidable performance anxiety. Some socialize, others set the tone on a phantasmic C that is in the air and everyone waits for the leader that convoked them. In a few minutes these, as the first ones, will have the possibility to express themselves, to speak out, to throw out, as notes, all their sensations and emotions in the enormous orchestral hotchpots.

Freedom

The two groups are very close to each other because of the chance they both have to express "the inexpressible" each in his own way. Very soon, in fact, those that Bion

calls beta elements will come out as free associations or free improvisations and will be able to express themselves.

In the analytical groups S.H. Foulkes has individuated a communicative modality that he called discussion freely fluctuating characterized by the succeeding of phrases that the group members say, in absolute freedom's and linked together by a guiding thread which expresses the group's logic. The contents that these "chains" express and the ways in which they are structured outline the course of the session and most of all the "group's thought". These "discussions" that Neri defines (1995) groupal associative chains are also characterized by an extremely tolerant and permissible atmosphere, in which, in any moment, it is allowed to distance from the discussion's subject and talk about one's own experience. The origin of this "modus comunicandi" is naturally due to Freud's method of the free associations described in the "Third Conference on Psychoanalysis" of 1909. (OFS.Vol.6).

Freud affirms that to obtain the patient's return of the repressed he has to be put in a passive condition, with absence of criticism and abandon himself to the course of one's own thoughts, not guided by any research intentions and, at the same time, of absolute honesty and giving up on any reservation on communicating. He called the single elements that come in the patient's mind Enflame. Enflame (in a figurative sense) is the idea that quickly comes into mind. He also indicated this ideative material like material associated by the subject, and the situations in which this material is recalled with the term association, or free associations, because they are not blinded by a particular intentional task. (see Musatti 1957).

In the same way, in music there are some situations in which the members of an ensemble have the opportunity to "say their own opinion" having as starting-point a theme which has been decided before: these particularly fascinating moments are called "jam session". This "custom" began in the racist US of the '20. In the "swing period" orchestras like the one of Kid Ory (in which militated a young, ill-treated cornet player called Louis Armstrong) played dance music in many locals of Manhattan for white people only. At the end of the evening, though, many musicians got together in the "rough locals" of bad repute in Harlem to be able to express their creativity which had been entrapped till a few minutes before in scores full of "obbligati", in which it was unavoidable seeing a destiny that could quickly change only thanks to the "jam". This habit spread out so much that from it came the "be-bop"; a new musical movement. Often the new "musical products" were introduced from the themes that the black were forced to play every night, but afterwards followed the improvisations that had the taste of revenge and that of course twisted the "originals". (see Mauro, 1994)

This was the official origin of improvisation, the unofficial one probably born many centuries ago. W. Hildesheimer (1997) tells us that usually the young Mozart- during his nocturnal excursions in the locals of Strasbourg's slums- used to twist the melody and the harmonic structure of his own compositions with improvisation in order to take away from his distress caused by continuous assignments that came from all courts of Europe.

Resonance

Associative chains and free improvisations are the first true interactions that we can find in the groups described before. There is a physical phenomenon that- related to our two groups- allows its members to get emotionally and affectively involved during these interactions: we are talking about resonance. C.Neri in "Gruppo" (1995) tells us that this phenomenon has been discovered by Helmholtz round about in 1862: he found out that a physical system can be put into vibration with a frequency that is even very distant from its own. When the exciting frequency reaches the natural one that system is said to be in resonance. This phenomenon that, Helmholtz himself extended to optics and electro-magnetism, can also be found in groups of musicians and analytical ones. In these kind of groups resonance is the base of group work: it is useful for the individual because it helps him in the difficult process that will lead him towards the intellectual honesty. This self-consciousness, that is an immediate consequence of the Ego structure's strengthening is favored by what Foulkes calls the mirror effect. This condition makes the individual watch himself because he sees the others interacting with him. It often happens that the subject sees the group react in the same way he reacts: "he learns to know himself through the action that he exerts on the others and through the image that the others gained of him." (Foulkes, 1964 p.123). The mechanism that lays underneath the mirror function has its primordial roots even in children's behavior: they interact with peers and adults adopting a pattern like: "you are answering to me so I exist" (see Winnicott, 1971, p.189).

In music the concept of resonance is very common, a synonymous which is often used is "sympathy": in fact we can say that the two drum leathers (the superior and the inferior one) both play for sympathy even if only one is struck. If we consider a drum like a closed system -formed by many elements- and we consider the vibration produced by the upper leather like a message, we will be able to notice that the other parts of the drum, with the arrival of the vibration, resound enriching the final result.

In groups of people it happens exactly the same thing: in an emotional system the sound-waves send a message to which is impossible not answering. Given for granted that there is an emotional link during the expressive moments in a group of musicians, it is impossible to deny that when there is a clear message saturated with clear contents is could be possible to create a sequence of answers linked to that certain stimulus. It is very easy to appreciate this phenomenon during a jazz concert. During improvisation it often happens that the whole group answers to a precise intention of the soloist. The falling-off of expressive intensity corresponds to a falling-off, the increase to an increase, all this without any preliminary agreements and without a group invasion during the single improvisations. It seems obvious to me that in these moments a "mirror effect" establishes- which is very similar to the one of analytical groups because the musician, expressing himself, obtains a resounding answer, strengthens his narcissistic Ego and at the same time steps

forward towards the consciousness of himself and of his communicative and expressive abilities in group.

Transpersonal Phenomena

Claudio Neri, in the small analytical groups, individuates three types of transpersonal phenomena:

- The sessions atmosphere or back tone ("tono di fondo").
- The medium
- The effects of primitive mentality and of basic assumptions.

These phenomena, interacting, give life to the group's dynamics which Bion calls the work group, that is the conscious interaction aimed to change that gives life to the group work.

The atmosphere or back tone ("tono di fondo")

The atmosphere or back tone of the session is founded by all the emotions and feelings that the group produces during the analytical session, it can, of course be influenced by any group member that -bringing new unsteady contents -can introduce new stimulating issues in the group's interaction. An example that can clarify this concept comes from Bion in the second chapter of "Experiences in groups" (1961 page 41): he reports the intervention of a patient which, fed up of the usual atmosphere that had characterized the last sessions has an aggressive explosion. The tone that the patient uses to address to the group has the classic function of a primordial defense but it also unavoidably includes that new issue in the group that could change the "atmosphere." Here is Bion's text: "You (that is, the group) always say I am monopolizing, but if I don't talk you just sit there like dumb things. I'm fed up with the whole damn lot of you. And you (pointing to a man of twenty-six, who raises his eyebrows in a smoothly efficient affectation of surprise) are the worst lot. Why do you always sit there like a good little boy- never saying anything, but upsetting the group? Dr. Bion is the only one who is ever listened to here, and he never says anything helpful. All right, then, I'll shut up. Let's see what you do about it if I don't monopolize."

From this example we can notice that the atmosphere or back tone can change perceptions and moods but it can also be changed by the same issues of which it is founded, that is the emotions that each group member has in comparison of one another, of the group, that, as Foulkes says, originate from the way the single person relationships to his social context. (Foulkes, 1969).

In music, first of all, we must distinguish the rehearsal's atmosphere from the one of a concert; the experience that characterizes these two situations are obviously different. A rehearsal is usually characterized by relationships which are standard that cause atmospheres which can seem even strange and funny to an external observatory, (who is never well agreeable even if a relative).

From the interpersonal relationship's point of view it often happens that in each company one of the members, and not necessarily the most experienced, the oldest one, the most qualified, the most nuisance, the one who talks the most, assumes the leader function, or the function of Pinocchio's "speaking cricket"; another member the role of the victim of overbalance and ironies; another, at last, invests himself of the ensign qualification of the "lets keep things going". Obviously all this can change by introducing a new member that can cause the new engagement of "roles" and a consequent change of atmosphere.

From the group's work point of view we must distinguish two kinds of rehearsal, that will make us observe two different atmospheres: " there are rehearsals in which we take care of details, in which we have to control minutely every single sixty-fourth note, quints and double flats, and rehearsals of synthesis and recap where it is impossible to stop, like a concert, in order to value and regulate one's own capacity of resistance, concentration, and poetic fit." (Canino, 1997 p.109).

Both these atmospheres may be influenced or changed by individual issues or due to the group as an entity that exists by itself.

What would happen if during a session planned for the research of details, which is characterized by a high tension, one of the members would disburden his tension on the group, maybe deriving from personal experience. That tension, which is necessary for the musical energy would reach unbearable levels and it would, at last, have an inhibiting effect, absolutely not useful for the group's work.

I will recur to a passage from maestro Persichilli's interview once again to describe the atmosphere of a concert and the way it can transform: "the moment of public performance is always characterized by a big tension inside the orchestra, I shall say that this kind of atmosphere is necessary for a good performance. It is like a sort of breeze that gravitates on top of the orchestra, like a climate that you can feel through out the members, something which is extremely powerful but at the same time so fragile. With this I don't want to say that each event can change this atmosphere- which is the result of days and days of rehearsing together- but surely it can become more rich with new issues that come from outside brought inside by one of the members. My memory flies back to 1968 when the wind quintet was founded with the first parts of Santa Cecilia's orchestra: I remember that in that group we were all very united and all got on well together. It was sufficient that one of us was distressed that every one got involved in it and naturally it was possible to hear it in our sound. At that point though something magic happened: the single member could take some benefit from the group's energy during the performance and he would reload letting himself go to the impulse of the musical speech." This last intervention of maestro Persichilli¹ is useful to close the subject on the back atmosphere opened up with the

¹ The teacher Angelo Persichilli, flautist, has played at a very high level for about fifty years : he founded many "ensembles" of chamber music of international success, he has been the first flute of the orchestra of Santa Cecilia's academy from 1957-1997 year of his withdrawal. Today the maestro adds to the concerts- to which he didn't renounce- the activity of co-ordinator and art director of schools and specialization classes for wind instruments.

example taken by Experiences in Groups ; it has been possible to put in evidence the existence of many common issues of the two atmospheres. With a more happy image we could talk of a unique atmosphere which lies under the production of many different sounds, all this considered in a becoming view, never steady, in continuous chngement.

“The Medium”

In 1766 an English surgeon Samuel Sharp; who had travelled across all Italy, published Letters from Italy , a very stinging account of our customs of that period. He also described strange noblemen’s habits in Naples when they got together in San Carlo's theater for listening to music. This is how he described the events and the environment that characterized the performance:

"There is who says that it would be possible to hear the singers (in the great frame of the theatre) if the audience would be more silent, but in Naples and in all Italy it is such a custom to consider the theatre like a rendezvous place or where to receive visits; instead of listening to the music everybody laughs and talks like if they where in their own house. the men from Naples run from one box to another during the intermezzi: they also do it during the performance what makes the italian theatres, in every city, dark and also melancholic is the custom of lightening only the scene and I think that there is a usual scarsness of lightening because they don't want to waste money for wax candles. about the inconveniences of the theatre's wideness one of the most serious is that when the wind blows it seems to be outside in the street: often going home people bring back from the theatre a cold or fever." (Sharp, 1776, cit. in FMR n.59). Much noise, low lights and even wind and cold were the first elements that the young notes of the orchestra had to face; the sound, before reaching the audience had to cross a "space" that unavoidably would transform it. To us such an environment may seem absolutely degenerate and not suitable to music, especially the classic² one, but if we let our self down for one moment in that period's atmosphere- in which all the performances where characterized that way- we can imagine that the human capacity of adaptation was such that the environment was tolerated by all and that probably, without that kind of atmosphere, there wouldn't of been the conditions for a good result of the performance. This could of brought a drop of interest and a consequent drop of production that, instead was at the top just in that period: on this argument Francis Haskell, describing that historical period writes: " Italian music was heard from one end to the other of Europe: in Leningrad they played the *Barbiere di Siviglia* of Paisiello, in Vienna the *Matrimonio Segreto* of Cimarosa, in Paris the *Medea* of Cherubini, and in Madrid they listened Boccherini's string quartet ." (Haskell, 1987, in FMR p.58).

² Truly in the seventeenth century the distinction "modern" between classical music and other kinds of music didn't exist, this custom- evidently necessary when it assumes denotative values- becomes equally despicable when it as laves a certain discriminate habit that, with time, made the "classical" music become not so usable and heard only by the "èlite".

The music which was produced was "composed" by notes and by the medium with which and in spite of, it was diffused; the product was absolutely inseparable from the environment in which it was played and probably a revolution in this sense would have been absolutely unbearable for the audience and musicians of that time³.

In the same way, jumping into the group-analytical context, M. Mc Luhan (1997, pagg. 25-30) affirms that the media with which communication occurs are never neutral compared to the communication itself, but on the contrary it influences it deeply. Sometimes the medium's impact overtakes the content that it should convey: "the medium is the message". It isn't a chance that W.R. Bion describing one of his groups writes: "the group is formed by four women . the atmosphere is in a good mood. the room is pleasingly lightened by the sunset's light." (Bion, 1971, p.58).

Surely, the fact that there is more or less light in a room, that it is produced by cozy lamps that color the light yellow or by cold neon, that there is much noise, or no noise at all coming from outside, or that, at last there are acoustic conditions with more or less absorption of the voice, are all phenomena that characterize the group interaction. We can know that these conditions can induce feelings of cozy reception or cold detachment and, as C. Neri says, they are to be considered of absolute importance, related to the dynamics that occur in the group itself. Again C. Neri (1995, p. 41) explains that " when these changes are slow, there is a major possibility of adaptation, and that when these changes are fast the result is that the area of the perceptive relationship due to that medium becomes turbid and partially anesthetized. This perceptive area can even be ejected from consciousness ."

This natural defense of the individual can also be found in musical groups that play in prohibitive acoustic and light conditions, on this argument the maestro Arnaldo Apostoli⁴ declared that "The acoustic and luminosity conditions of a concert hall are absolutely determining for the production and use of the musical expression; if the light is too low or makes you blind, if the acoustics disperses the sound so that the components can't have a feedback from the other instruments- which is necessary for the interaction- it is easy to understand that the final product will be deeply signed. Of course in this case we have to go on and a mechanism which will permit the musician to adapt himself to the conditions in which he is will take place; it is like if for the moment the problem is forgotten because of the professional obligation to finish the work. The final result though is unavoidably compromised just like the musicians' good mood." The only thing that I feel to add at this point is that "in medium stat virtus".

³ To understand each other, it would be like listening to Chopin's "Notturmi" on vinyl records played by the unequalled Rubinstien, without that typical crackling that makes them even more fascinating.

⁴ The maestro Arnaldo Apostoli is one of the six violinists of the chamber ensemble "I Musici". This chamber orchestra, absolutely anomalous for the high number of his members (they are twelve), and for the attachment of the members to the group (the last member that changed dates twenty years ago), from fifty years plays in every corner on earth, keeping the name of Italy in great esteem and gaining enormous successes and consents on world-wide level.

The effects of the primitive mentality and of the basic assumptions

The primitive mentality is a phenomenon that is produced when many people get together in a group. Like in the individual there are developed aspects of personality and regressed ones, even in groups there is a regressed mentality (that corresponds to the mass-group described in Psychology of Masses and Ego analysis by Freud) and a developed mentality (for example the ability to cooperate to reach a goal). This unconscious group mentality, that is the result and the container of the anonymous contributions of the single participants, involves the tendency to give automatic answers non filtered by Ego. This is a dimension from which it is difficult not to get involved because it is entirely governed by the unconscious. How much the group functions according to a primitive mentality, as much it can set a limit to the people's freedom, asking to conform oneself to a certain collective working. This is an equalization that is asked both in thought (through the elimination of dissonant thoughts) and in emotions.

If the group mentality was considered a vessel or a container of all the members' contributions, the concept of basic assumption gives us information on the content of this group's common and anonymous opinion in a given moment, investigating our knowledge on emotional phenomena in groups.

The basic assumptions represent the group's mechanisms of defense and they have the function of keeping primitive anxieties, unbridled by group participation, under control. Their existence conditions the kind of organization that the group gives himself and determines the way to face the goal to accomplish. We must underline that these emotional necessary impulses have irrational issues and possess great energy that expresses itself in the group's behavior. Because they are mechanisms of defense they are unconscious and often are in opposition with the rational opinions of the participants. Bion has individuated three basic assumptions: dependent, fight-flight, pairing.

The dependent assumption is characterized by the belief that the group has to be together because of the therapist, from which they expect everything and that will provide to the satisfaction of all the wishes and necessities. There is the collective belief of a protecting numen, whose goodness, wisdom and power are out of discussion. When the dependent assumption dominates the communication net in the group seems to pass through the therapist, to whom every body asks many kind of questions with the hope that he will give the answer.

When the fight-flight assumption dominates, the group seems to be sure that there is an enemy from which it is necessary to defend oneself by fighting or from which it is necessary to flee.

It is like if the bad object is seen outside and the only defensive activity is to destroy it (fight) or avoiding it (flight). According to Bion both these ways reply to the same motivational dynamic, that is a defensive flee in the activity for one's own proper salvation. The choice of one or the other is due to accidental factors, so that the group takes the first possibility that comes to satisfy the emergent need.

At last the third basic assumption, pairing, consists in the hope that two people together, or a chosen subgroup, will create a solution for the actual problems, by pairing and producing a prodigy infant.

It is an irrational Messianic hope, that permits to set aside problems and the group's actual necessities in consideration of a future event. In this emotional state what is important is the idea of the future and not the resolution of problems in the present.

In a musical group it isn't difficult to verify the existence of a primitive mentality (considering that it's composed by phenomena which Freud extended to all forms of human aggregation.) and , most of all, of basic assumptions just as Bion has described them. The primitive mentality, in music, is easily verifiable every time a group gets together to play, interpreting with the same intensity passages which they see for the first time, in my opinion this harmonic interpretation could be the result of a of automatic replies, that- having as stimulus the "score"- follow one another, are pushed one from the other, are all linked together and are characterized by a lack of egoic filters. The structural boundaries of the Ego get thinner, they become porous and in this way the unconscious melt in favor of a new collective unconscious that unavoidably will have new rules and a new coherence that often doesn't coincide with the one of the single members.

I drew this conclusion when I saw a rehearsal of a very promising duo ,the duo Apostoli-De Lorenzi⁵. These two musicians confronted for the first time a tango of Astor Piazzolla, but from the perfect synchrony with which they interpreted the many "colors"⁶, dosing them in an identical way, it seemed that they knew the piece from a long time. The musical message which is produced can, in fact, have an emotional correspondence by the users both if they are audience or musicians themselves that produce the music. In my opinion it has to spring from a common origin which is both harmonic and preponderant on the single element that contributes to its construction. This process that I just described is the one that I was able to observe during the rehearsal. It was evident that the two musicians were driven by a common aim (group work), and without knowing it, they sacrificed their interpretative individualities in favor of a new group individuality, necessary for the acquirement of new expressive parameters compatibles with the harmonic intention of the final product. If the unconscious of the two musicians did not melt together, there wouldn't of been a final harmony; everyone would of interpreted in his own way the various "crescendo" and "diminuendo", "piano" or "fortissimo" with the result of a total expressive disharmony. We would of noticed that the "piano" of the flautist would of

⁵ The duo composed by Andrea Apostoli (flautist) and Massimo de Lorenzi (guitar-player) born in 1994 and from then he brought himself out in many national and international happenings.

⁶ The "color" in the musicians' language indicates both the sonorous and expressive intensity and the way with which, according to the author, a certain passage has to be faced . Usually indications of this kind in the score are underneath the notes and are indicated like this: pp=pianissimo, p=piano. mf=mezzo forte, f=forte, ff=fortissimo and so on; naturally though, the color's intensity can change from musician to musician and, often one of the qualities that is most artistically appreciated is just this interpretative research that makes the difference from a good musician and a genius.

overtook the one of the guitarist, or maybe it would of happened the opposite; the final effect would of been surely not harmonic and there would of been the preponderance of one instrument on the other. To describe what instead happened in a metaphoric way I would like to suggest to the reader an image: the final product of that rehearsal could be assimilated to a steam of water that finally had the energy to come up on the surface because of the meeting of two underground springs. With that melting together they surely lost their primordial characteristics, but gained the necessary vigor to go beyond the wall that divides them from the outside. Because the creation of group unconscious is the "conditio sine qua non" of the group musical expression it is unavoidable to observe phenomena that are tightly connected to it.

In the course of my investigation I ran into episodes that are, in my opinion, to be identified with those particular group dynamics that Bion called basic assumptions. In particular I happened to observe that in a symphonic orchestra, in difficult situations, the players answer with the dependent assumption that inhibits group work or at least it slowness it.

In this case, naturally, the "numen" from which they depend is the conductor, that has to organize and guide the players⁷.

This personage becomes idealized from the group: and problems come out when the orchestra uses this idealization to delegate to the conductor every responsibility of moments of impasse or of the group's failure. This is the moment in which everyone stops to believe in the group and completely place their trust in this figure that, in a certain way- because idealized- is distanced from the group and, by consequence can be fought and questioned. "This happens very often, in all the orchestra-players and mostly with permanent conductors, because, naturally, the relationship with a passing chief is tolerated better than the one with a permanent person " told us the maestro Persichilli.

Beyond the most evident interpretations (and surely not of less value) in this relationship, denoted by ambivalence, I would like to see an arcaic origin: just like adolescents- that still depend from their father- stamp with anger and don't miss the opportunity to act their differences, maybe with detachment and denigration, in the same way the orchestra-players deny the father-conductor with the same energy with which they feel their dependence. Naturally, most of the times, the dependent feeling remains underneath, in the depth of unconscious of the single and of the group and by

⁷ On this purpose the maestro Angelo Persichilli, answering to a precise question on the qualities that an orchestra conductor should own, told me: "A real orchestra conductor, that I differentiate from simple conductors, is a individual that owns three basic qualities: The leadership, that is the authority and the authoritativeness to give orders; the musical imagination, that is the creative impulse that permits him to be present in every moment and in each score changing it in favor of the final result; the ability to put his ideas into practice, that pragmatic issue that, if absent, makes ideas remain ideas." In the same way F.Corrao (quoted in C.Neri in the Rivista di Psicoanalisi , XXVII, 1981,p.361) writes: " The analyst does not only have to promote the research of truth (the leader) and has to be in unisonous with it (the mystic) but he also has to be able to communicate it in an effective way (the artist).

consequence is distanced from consciousness without the opportunity of losing its power.

The second basic assumption that I observed is the pairing one; to describe the modality that occurs in a musical ensemble I will resort to a personal experience that dates 1996. During winter time that I year I was asked to cooperate as a percussionist in a rhythm and blues band formed by ten components. The members were extremely fine but, after many rehearsals, the music was not characterized by that basic amalgam from which the audience and the musicians get nourishment. This phenomenon primed a general bad mood and a real motivational arrest that the group- during one of the rehearsals- tried to solve in this way: the various sections⁸ of the band had to meet afterwards, so, first of all, they would find an amalgam within the single subgroup, and then transfer it to the whole band. With this stratagem the group avoided to face the present problems, delegating everything to subgroups that in the future, pairing, probably would have solved them. All this, was in service of an inhibiting breeze that lay on the group that, blind, had the illusion of having solved the problem when instead they had only removed it.

To demonstrate the intervention of the third basic assumption, fight-flight, like an inhibiting cause in a musical ensemble, I will recur to an episode that the maestro Andrea Apostoli, flautist, told me: "I was with Massimo De Lorenzi in a small room next to the stage, and we were warming up, when suddenly from the room beside we were flooded by a rain of notes played with an impressive ease of technique. This was the favored duo to win the final competition that, just like us, was warming up. For a few seconds we stayed there, unarmed, suffering for that violence, exchanging astonished glances, in silence." At this point, the maestro paused briefly, maybe going through those instants again and then suddenly continued: "There is something I must state beforehand, that is that my technique endowments are definitively inferior than my expressive ones, and this, in time, conditioned even my personality in the duo, that always chose to perform a repertory that had its strength points in the research of sound and expressiveness. So it is possible to imagine what weight that aggression would have had on the final performance. Instead what happened was that, after some moments of awe, without saying a word, my partner and I began to counter-attack, of course in our own way: we began to play the most intense passage of our evening's repertory, and when we discovered that that our two rivals stopped and listened to us with curiosity, we repeated it with major emphasis.

At a certain point we heard the door of the room beside that was nervously being closed: the time for the exhibition arrived, for them like for us. Our exhibition is been wonderful, so that we won the competition. The episode that should have discouraged us instead revealed itself to be a great stimulus. On the contrary there has been

⁸ A rhythm and blues band is usually composed by one or more singers, a wind section (trumpets, trombones, saxophones, etc.) a harmonic section (piano, guitar) and a rhythmic section (electric bass or double-bass, drums, percussions).

something strange that characterized our rivals' performance: they played in a released way. fine, yes but nervous, annoyed by something." then addressing to me " Do you think it is possible that our counter-attack could of damaged in some way their integrity so to make them play definitively beneath their possibilities?" My answer has obviously been affirmative.

Truly I think that in this episode we can clearly identify two dynamics that are at the base of group interaction.

The duo Apostoli-De Lorenzi answered to the attack that came from outside in the first place working-out what was happening during those moments of awe in which they searched for one another with their glances, then, with an answer that I would define immediate (using this term in its common meaning, and with the meaning that comes from its etymology: in-medium = without mediation). The aggression that came from outside had to go off motivational issues and, to say it with Bion, it has stimulated the group work aimed first for the counterattack and then for the victory.

The fight-flight assumption, instead, dominated in the rival group. The ones that- as we can remember- started as favorites, suffered from the answers of the second ones that, instead of stimulating them, primed the inhibiting defense mechanism of "flight" compromising unavoidably the "group work".

In this paper we investigated some phenomena that, presenting themselves from the beginning, characterize group interaction and illustrate its courses. Even with a bit of satisfaction- it seems to us that we confirmed the unavoidable closeness of the two types of groups, having as starting point and developing the hinge concept that inspired us since the beginning: both in the musical groups and in the psychoanalytic ones the element that can't be ignored is the of the unconscious, that is the basis of conscious and unconscious, voluntary and involuntary, processes, and from which depends the motivation and the survival of the group itself.

References

- Bion, W.R. (1961), *Esperienze nei gruppi*. Roma: Armando Editore, 1971.
- Bion, W.R. (1970), *Attenzione e interpretazione. Una prospettiva scientifica sulla psicoanalisi e sui gruppi*. Roma: Armando Editore, 1973.
- Canino, B. (1997), *Vademecum del pianista da camera*. Firenze-Antella: Passagli Editori.
- Foulkes S.H. (1964), *Therapeutic Group Analysis*. George Allen Unwin, London. Trad. It. Torino: Boringhieri, 1967.
- Freud, S. (1909), Terza conferenza sulla psicoanalisi. In *Opere*, vol. 6. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri: Torino, 1989.
- Haskell, F. (1987), *Past and Present in Art and Taste*. Yale University Press, London. Cit. In FMR n. 59, vol. XIII marzo 1988. Milano: Franco Maria Ricci Editore.

- Hildesheimer W. (1977), *Mozart*. Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main. Trad. It. Firenze: Sansoni Editore Nuova S.p.a., 1979.
- Mauro W. (1994), *Storia del jazz*. Roma: Newton Compton Editori s.r.l.
- Mcluhan, M. (1977), *Dall'occhio all'orecchio*. Roma: Armando Editore, 1982.
- Musatti C.L. (1957), *Trattato di Psicoanalisi*. Torino: Edizioni Scientifiche Einaudi s.a.s.
- Neri, C. (1981), Note sugli assunti di base di W.R. Bion. In *Rivista di psicoanalisi*, XXVII, 3-4.
- Neri, C. (1995), *Gruppo*. Roma: Borla.
- Sharp, S. (1776), Letters from Italy. in *FMR*, n. 59, vol XIII marzo 1988. Milano: Franco Maria Ricci Editore.
- Winnicott, D. (1971), *Gioco e realtà*. Roma: Armando Editore, 1971.

Notes

[1]The teacher Angelo Persichilli, flautist, has played at a very high level for about fifty years : he founded many "ensembles" of chamber music of international success, he has been the first flute of the orchestra of Santa Cecilia's academy from 1957-1997 year of his withdrawal. Today the maestro adds to the concerts- to which he didn't renounce- the activity of co-ordinator and art director of schools and specialization classes for wind instruments.

[2]Truly in the seventeenth century the distinction "modern" between classical music and other kinds of music didn't exist, this custom- evidently necessary when it assumes denotative values- becomes equally despicable when it as laves a certain discriminate habit that, with time, made the "classical" music become not so usable and heard only by the "èlite".

[3]To understand each other, it would be like listening to Chopin's "Notturmi" on vinyl records played by the unequalled Rubinstien, without that typical crackling that makes them even more fascinating.

[4]The maestro Arnaldo Apostoli is one of the six violinists of the chamber ensemble "I Musici". This chamber orchestra, absolutely anomalous for the high number of his members (they are twelve), and for the attachment of the members to the group (the last member that changed dates twenty years ago), from fifty years plays in every corner on earth, keeping the name of Italy in great esteem and gaining enormous successes and consents on world-wide level.

[5]The duo composed by Andrea Apostoli (flautist) and Massimo de Lorenzi (guitar-player) born in 1994 and from then he brought himself out in many national and international happenings.

[6] The "color" in the musicians' language indicates both the sonorous and expressive intensity and the way with which, according to the author, a certain passage has to be faced . Usually indications of this kind in the score are underneath the notes and are

indicated like this: pp=pianissimo, p=piano. mf=mezzo forte, f=forte, ff=fortissimo and so on; naturally though, the color's intensity can change from musician to musician and, often one of the qualities that is most artistically appreciated is just this interpretative research that makes the difference from a good musician and a genius.

[7] On this purpose the maestro Angelo Persichilli, answering to a precise question on the qualities that an orchestra conductor should own, told me: "A real orchestra conductor, that I differentiate from simple conductors, is a individual that owns three basic qualities: The leadership, that is the authority and the authoritativeness to give orders; the musical imagination, that is the creative impulse that permits him to be present in every moment and in each score changing it in favor of the final result; the ability to put his ideas into practice, that pragmatic issue that, if absent, makes ideas remain ideas." In the same way F.Corrao (quoted in C.Neri in the Rivista di Psicoanalisi , XXVII, 1981,p.361) writes: " The analyst does not only have to promote the research of truth (the leader) and has to be in unisonous with it (the mystic) but he also has to be able to communicate it in an effective way (the artist).

[8] A rhythm and blues band is usually composed by one or more singers, a wind section (trumpets, trombones, saxophones, etc.) a harmonic section (piano, guitar) and a rhythmic section (electric bass or double-bass, drums, percussions).

Gregorio Simonelli is Psychologist-Psychotherapy- Musician- Percussionist.

Chairman of the Scientific Association VEGA.

Via Robert Scott, 106-112

E-mail: gregorio.simonelli@tiscali.it

Mobile. 348. 4000170

Ad.06. 5138517

Translated by Dr. Lucrezia Baldassarre