

Bion and Foulkes, a mythological encounter, only, but it is already enough

Leonardo Ancona

Abstract

We can affirm that Bion's summit and his impact on dialectics between alfa and beta elements constitute the most authentic and complete theory of Foulkes' summit: the group-analytical theory that a number of people have blamed him for not being able to or not knowing how to elaborate.

Which certainly doesn't mean that psychoanalysis and group-analysis should coincide; rather, it means that the "group dynamics" described by Bion are part of the latter, to belong to its basic matrix, and that Bionian analysis, in the depth of the psychoanalytic process, can be seen as the necessary component for the "symbiotic" encounter "between Bion's and Foulkes' thoughts.

In any case, we are talking about an encounter built on "myth".

Key words: encounter, myth, group analysis, dialectic

1) W. Bion and S. Foulkes are two emblematic characters of the world of analysis that dedicates itself to the exploration of the unconscious mind: both were born in a contemporary psychoanalytical culture and both followed the same teachings of Freud; they have developed and expanded his philosophy, each reaching a high level of popularity and each becoming clinical\didactic pioneers in their field; however they have separated themselves from the Teacher and each has followed his own path, especially on a group level. From this viewpoint, the historical events and the theoretical developments have radically polarized the two authors, thus giving birth to two Schools of Thought and of clinical intervention, that, although addressing the same topic and subject, that is the group field, have differentiated their followers as "Bionians" and "Foulkesians".

This differentiation has not been restricted to connecting the former ones to the Tavistock Clinic and the latter ones to the Maudsley Hospital in London, but has led to theoretical research, projects on a congressional level and publications that from the U.K. have spread throughout the planet, thus leading to the foundation of other Schools of Specialization and Scientific Associations; all this without an actual encounter ever taking place, nor an in-depth exchange, a mutual recognition of merits; at best statements of intentions never followed through. As Hinshelwood says (1999): "In fact they (Bion and Foulkes) seemed to establish a mutual disregard to which their respective followers have remained loyal".

The purpose of this project is to promote a synthesis between Bion and Foulkes based on "myth"; not meaning as such "fantasy narration of times and characters" but "idealization" of a historical event that displays an extraordinary aspect or also the pattern that in a literary work takes on a particular importance and highlight" (Mieli,

1995): historical event and pattern represented here by the discovery of the "group-as-a-whole". Our wish is that this mythological encounter will allow the integration of a complementarity that does justice to and increases the efficiency of the two parties involved.

2) It is well-known that Bion and Foulkes are the offspring, the products of the same cultural journey, and also, professionwise, they both come from the Northfield Military Hospital of Birmingham.

We are talking about the culture that in the twenties and thirties intensively promoted social psychology; more specifically Bion and Foulkes were both influenced, formed, by the aspect that social psychology had taken on in the germanic psychology of that period.

As a matter of fact, at the origin of their thought we can find the German gestaltians of the first generation, Kurt Lewin and Max Wertheimer, both researchers at the Berlin Institute of Psychology, the basic philosophy of which was however strongly influenced by the C. Stumpf's phenomenology.

The nazi persecution forced both Lewin and Wertheimer to emigrate to the U.S.A., taking with them the bitter experience of the effectiveness and socially destructive force of a group perversely compact, as the one Hitler had instigated: really nazism had been the first example of "group-as-a-whole".

The derivation of Bion's philosophy from Lewin leaves no room for doubt; although there has been no personal contact between the two, we know that Lewin (1935) translated the idea of "field", a gestalt intended as a system of forces acting in intra-personal space to move each individual into specific psychological states (which he did by applying the basic gestalt principles of perception), into interpersonal relations. Regarding this, the concept of "field" was meant by Lewin's as a totality of psychological phenomena that act through mutual interdependencies of energies; that is, that a person finds himself in the middle of field environmental forces that modify him and to the modification of which he also contributes.

The individual's behavior, his social roles are therefore a function of his vital space, according to the formula:

$$B = f (P \times E)$$

where B stands for behavior, f for function, P for personality and E for environment.

Lewin had thus created the concept of "Group Dynamics", that he promoted at the Boston M.I.T. (1947) and started to advertise in scientific journal.

During that period, Eric Tris, a Tavistock clinical psychologist who in 1934 had gone to the U.S.A., had brought back home Lewin's "field theory" and Bion had been directly interested in it (1990).

The evidence of this confluence is noticeable from the first issues of Human Relations, a magazine published from 1947 both by the Tavistock Clinic (London) and by the Group Dynamics Center (Ann Arbor, Mich.), where Lewin's followers had gone to work after his death: as a matter of fact between 1948 and 1951 Bion

published his main works about the group, giving them for title just "Group Dynamics".

We are mentioning below the principles of the "group dynamics", summarized by de Board (1978) as follows:

- Each individual exists in a psychological field of forces that determines his or her behaviour: the life space;
- This field of forces is, in Lewin's words, "the totality of co-existing facts which are conceived of as mutually interdependent" (1972);
- The life space is subjective - it is the world as perceived by the individual;
- The life space consists of conscious and unconscious aims, dreams, fears, past experiences, expectations and social conditions;
- There is dynamics equilibrium: without change in the field there is no change in behaviour. Equally, a change of behaviour will mean a change in the field.

Highlighted in this picture are the processes of belonging, interdependence (cooperation-competition), of normative coexistence (towards the group members) and defensiv (against others or against the members perceived as strangers), of formation of sub-groups and of dependence on a leader; all processes that we regularly find in the group pattern described by Bion (1961) in terms of "Basic Assumptions".

There we specifically find the theoretical deformation mentioned at the regard of Ann Arbor's researchers, that is: in the equation $B = f(P \times E)$, the value of P has gradually decreased to the point of disappearing; so that only the field of the E forces keeps importance (Ancona, 1954).

As a matter of fact several sources have discovered and complained about the fact that in the treatment of groups of bionic orientation the single individual of the group disappears.

However, if we wish to have a more in-depth and wider examination of Bion's cultural epigenesis, we have to take into consideration the fact that Bion was radicallyly influenced by the group "military" mentality, perhaps an unnoticeable but determining factor, since at 21 he had been tank commander during the first world war and in 1942 had been responsible for the selection of the officers in the W.O.S.B. (War Office Selection Board), a selection referred to group tasks of a practical nature according to Lewin's principles (1946), and had conducted at the Northfield Hospital the rehabilitaton work on war veterans in difficulty; Bion did this work following an actual military strategy that established the war-generated neurosis as the enemy, his offensive action as a damage to the morale, and therapy as a military task of creating a high morale.

This was made possible by his previous belonging to a group committed to fighting under a commander as a war battalion, so as to reach a common goal.

As a consequence of all this, Bion brought to the Northfield Hospital a mentality of army regime, carried on also after his departure from the hospital, even though this mentality revealed itself as being in strong opposition to the medical and therapeutical mentality of that area.

Main (1977) highlighted this single-minded reply of war experience in a hospital and pointed out the opposition he received.

However this presupposition indicates that Bion's group approach was characterized at its root by the personal experience of "belonging", obtained through activity. This approach was reinforced and certainly not weakened by the psychoanalytical experience, that should be considered an important part of Bion's group epigenesis.

His first analytical experience was with Rickman, from 1937 to 1939, a scholar influenced by the mass culture of Russia where he had worked for a period of time after the 1918 world war; his second experience was with Melanie Klein, the Freud's combative epigon that eventually induced Bion to consider the Basic Assumptions as "defense" strategies, opposed to the conflicts and threats coming from an analytical group. It's interesting to note that the Basic Assumptions relate to the typical dynamics of a fighting military group, expressing "dependence" as the subordination to the area commander, "fight\flight" as the typical military strategy and "pairing" as the messianic ideal of salvation, as was the "Avanti Savoia!" of the Italian monarchy troops. Let's consider now the derivation of Foulkes thought from the Wertheimer's one. As far as this is concerned, we don't know of any personal contacts between the two, however, their living in the same cultural space, in Germany, is a fact and the theoretical bond between the two is obvious. Wertheimer's basic approach, already present in Germany, completed during his stay in Pennsylvania (Swarthmore) and accurately processed by his follower Asch (1952), can be summarized as follows:

the group is not only an external Gestalt, physically supported by the gathering of number of people, but at the same time it's also a Gestalt within each of them; each individual organizes in his own mind his personal idea of the group he belongs to, that is of both himself and the group: a totality of shared mental fields (Asch), where both the individuals and their group are simultaneously present and active.

This pattern may have been transmitted to Foulkes by Gelb and later by Goldstein, the two Gestaltian researchers that, as we well know, greatly influenced Foulkes' thought and group activity. He had indeed attended psychologist Gelb's university classes and participated in the studies that Goldstein, a neurosurgeon at Frankfurt Neurological Institute, was conducting on brain-damaged patients of the first world war, supporting the holistic concept of the central nervous system.

According to this concept, in case of lesions of a particular area of the brain, the functions processed by that area may be delegated to some other areas, since the brain responds as an indivisible whole; the lesion doesn't cause the loss of a particular

function so much, but it reflects on the global organization of the brain functions and more generally on the personality.

This fact led Goldstein to the conclusion that the central nervous system is a whole, not a conglomerate of parts, where the factors operating at a distance are always complementary with those operating nearby, in a relation similar to that of light\shade, picture\background (1940).

Spielberg (1972) summarizes Goldstein's approach with Foulkes' own words, as follows:

It is important to "record in an open-minded fashion all phenomena";

"The premature straight-jacketing of the phenomena by preconceived theories" is to be avoided;

Each phenomenon "needs to be seen in relation to the organism and the situation in which it appears"

Goldstein had called the totality of the neurons "network" and the individual neuron "nodal point"; Foulkes also called the group "network" in the first place, modifying lastly its name to matrix, and defined the individual components of the "social field", "nodal points" (1975).

In this "holistic concept" applied to the group, the two poles of an anti-nomic system are therefore always present and the formula $B = f(P \times E)$ is totally valid; this is exactly Wertheimer's basic inspiration, the phenomenological root that goes back to Stumpf.

Foulkes' model is actually a Gestaltic-phenomenological one, in which phenomena are important, especially the non-visible and the non-objectively measurable ones; and, as such, is opposed both the mechanistic model according to which the parties are in a direct cause\effect connection, and to the dualistic one, that manifests itself a separation between internal-external world: in fact, in the Foulkesian example the subject, the personal psychological process, cannot be considered separately from the group dynamics.

Regarding the more general cultural impact on Foulkes, he found himself relegated from the military operations, since during the world war service he was only assigned to the telephones; on the contrary an important factor for him was the input he received from Elias, the Medicine and Philosophy scholar at Breslavia University, before he had the same assignment in Sociology at the Frankfurt School.

That's where Foulkes met him, together they escaped from Nazism in 1938 and found a shelter in England and had a meaningful cooperation, until they worked on the project of a book to be written together, that never had a chance to materialize, because the beginning of the 1940 war.

The main exchange between Elias and Foulkes was within the frame of ideas offered by the former in his famous book "Ueber den Prozess der Zivilisation", as it appears

in his first book's review, made by Foulkes in 1938. After Elias' death, Elizabeth Foulkes (1990) wrote in the Group Analysis Society's Bulletin of London: "His voice was influential before the Society was founded (in 1952) and in its early years, while he still lived in London ...(He) represented the ...non-psychiatric element at the Society's meetings.

Also influential were the contacts that Foulkes had in London with Bowlby, and with the psychoanalysts' intermediate group; he was particularly impressed by the multi-personal perspective of Bowlby's "small groups", even though, strangely enough, it didn't draw the attention of London's psychiatric and psychoanalytic clubs (Scheidlinger, 1998); nor did Winnicott's theoretical approach go unnoticed by Foulkes, particularly his statement: "The centre of gravity of being does not start off in the individual.

It is the total set-up"; therefore "There is no such thing as a baby...if you show me a baby you certainly show me also someone caring for the baby ...one sees a nursing couple"(1982). A psychoanalysis open to the social and to communication.

These aspects represented Foulkes' concept of the group, essentially based upon the expressive communication and the therapeutic interest of free-floating discussion: neurosis as an expression of a troubled group relation, thus to be treated through the group exchange rather than focusing on a symptom.

Below is Hinselwood's summary of the differences between Bion's and Foulkes' concepts of group:

Foulkes

- 1 Individual in the matrix
- 2 Primary therapeutic interest
- 3 Facilitating free-flowing discussion
- 4 Caring culture
- 5 Individual-oriented
- 6 Self-expressive communication

Bion

- Group phenomenon in a field of forces
- Non-therapeutic group experience
- Insight into fore-back-ground relationship
- Military culture
- Social (morale) orientation
- Experience of belonging

These are the following theoretical developments: according to Bion's group: analysis is part and derivation of psychoanalysis, which it should stay connected to; the basic assumptions are the external manifestation that is part of the individual in his proto-mental layer, and although they are enriched by the dialectics in the "manifest" and the "latent" ones, the latter being considered more important, the focus always remains the internal world, in its expansion as a group; in contrast with this principle, in Bion the focus is the organization, according to a process that transcends the individual and in which the single group member cannot be identified any more.

Despite this "psychological reductionism", the Bionian orientation has greatly succeeded, especially in the psychoanalytic world.

This occurred since the beginning at the Tavistock Clinic; even though here Foulkes, having become Bion's successor a few weeks after his departure, had been welcome more warmly and had been more successful than his predecessor, Bion's "military culture" prevailed, especially through the efforts of Rickman who was powerful in the area and who, for personal reasons, was hindering Foulkes and his "curative culture".

On the other hand, Tavistock was becoming more and more important; in addition to the patients, it was expanding to the world of industry, of organization, of formation, and was becoming an "authority" at the basis of which stood a technology connected to the basic assumptions and to the objectual relations.

An authority characterized by the following principles

- a) the development of a formal and strict ideology and didactics;
- b) the imposition of its own viewpoint in behavior management;
- c) the assertion of an invasive professionalism and the attitude of "social watchman";
- d) the management of a therapeutic machine extended to one's whole life span.

A system of thought and action, therefore, that despised other approaches and schools; the definition Pines didn't hesitate to label this system with is "Tavistockracy" (1996).

A clear reflection of this mentality is expressed by the Italian Psychoanalytical Society, where the "group" is only accepted in the Bionian version, considered orthodox and faithful to the structure of the psychoanalytical doctrines; in contrast, other versions are disregarded, especially the Foulksian one. For example, when the "group analysis" societies planned on meeting in a Confederation (the Coirag), this immediately triggered a separation between the one headed by F. Corrao and by C. Neri; they abandoned the Confederation accusing it of "lack of sufficient respect for psychoanalysis"; and when the writer proposed to the Italian Review of Psychoanalysis a work of comparison between psycho-analysis and group-analysis, highlighting the merits of the second one, the initiative was rejected with contempt and was ridiculed. But immediately after, this work had the opportunity of being published in another, more open and creative, psycho analytic magazine (L. Ancona, 1996).

In contrast with the above, for Foulkes group analysis inherits from psycho-analysis the new alphabet discovered by S. Freud and his followers, however it is substantially different from it and as such it claims to have, with that alphabet, the ability to organize a new language, that is the group-analytic one: two different languages born from a unique alphabet.

The differentiation lies not only in semantics as much, which is not connected to psychoanalysis (a process where two people are involved), but in group-analysis (where a number of people are involved); the true difference lies in the fact that in psychoanalysis the target is the individual's internal world to which it addresses,

whereas group analysis focuses on the relation between several internal worlds, the approach is multi-personal and therapy is "simply the expression and communication of a person's experience to his group colleagues", it unfolds as a "discussion about neurosis as a disturbed relationship, rather than as a discourse upon a symptom",... trying to discover the "therapeutic factors of a group" (Hinselwood, ref. p. 481).

As a result, Foulkes' model is in contrast with the principle that in origin we have an individual psychological structure that, leaving aside the context as primary, deals with relations with other separate individuals and thus establishes a group (Freud,1921): psychoanalytical intra-personal perspective, substantially Cartesian, Aristotelic. On the contrary, Foulkes considers a psychological-phenomenological reality, thereby a human being since the beginning sets himself "in relation to", he is an originary group from which the individual is artificially removed: group-analytical, trans-personal, platonic perspective), exactly similar to the artificiality of the Ego, Es, Super-Ego concepts. (Elizabeth Foulkes, 1990, p. 113).

In this reality, the mind is an expression of the group and it exists not as object but as "series of events moving and proceeding all the time" (E. Foulkes, ref. p.224); a phenomenon similar to a language that, rather than being spoken, speaks.

In this light, the Foulkesian group-analysis aims at the non-authoritarian, tolerant, democratic orientation of therapy and encourages diversity; it doesn't consider the group as a single patient in individual analysis but facilitates communication between the group members and decreases the role of the leader; it interprets the crisis that may occur in the group not as a psychotic regression but as a positive but as a positive message for the group and for the patient in question; it uses the contributions of the single individuals to deal with the problems of the group life.

In one word, we are talking about a system open to information coming both from the internal and the external worlds, attentive to both the trans-personal and the trans-generational; and, as a result, considers itself a recipient as well as product not only referring to psychoanalysis but also to social psychology, and sociology, anthropology, history, and finally neuro-sciences.

Its activity produces what Foulkes (ref. 1975) calls "ego-training in action", a process that in simple words may indicate the beginning of the democratization of life.

To conclude, Foulkes has affirmed that "psychoanalysis is indispensable as a method of training but is not, all considered, the best method of psychotherapy. Group analysis is far superior", (E. Foulkes, ref. p. 272) and it's in conflict mainly with the "object-relation" theory of M.Klein, in that it postulates relations as relationships between whole persons.

4) Having thus reached this stage, it should be agreed that between Bion and Foulkes no encounters, exchanges, integrations are possible, and this has always been the general idea.

However, the subject is not finished yet and, as we said at the beginning, it can find a new development on the "myth" wave.

As we already mentioned, the "mythical fact" that Bion and Foulkes have in common is represented by the discovery of the "group-as-a-whole", a "whole" that obviously contains both the conscious and the unconscious dynamics, an unconscious different from the personal one studied by psychoanalysis.

As we look at it from this perspective, we have the ability to decipher right away an important difference between Bion and Foulkes; in dealing with the group dynamics, the former, obviously influenced by the Lewinian model, lacks an accurate examination of the group unconscious; he is only aware of the one connected to the dynamics of the "basic assumptions", seen as dimensions of the social life, and limits himself to unifying the totality of the group components and to replacing the individual mind with it; therefore, he remains on a sociological, statistical level, without focusing on the dynamics of the group members; only with the exception of stating that these "assumptions" originate from the individual proto-mental layer.

The attempt of looking into the topic further ends up following the line of Klein's theory, therefore it doesn't give any positive result for the knowledge of the group: it constitutes a reductionism of a psychoanalytical orientation.

It's certainly for these reasons, in addition to Bion's credibility in international psychoanalysis, that the narrow-minded psychoanalytical clubs accept only the Bionian group dynamics and improperly talk about "group psychoanalysis".

The main idea remains however that, as far as groups are concerned, Bion has elaborated a system of thought that can well be defined a lost cause, inadequate because of its partiality and superficiality, totally incomparable with the depth, wit and creativity that he has demonstrated in individual psychoanalysis.

He himself was aware of that and the writer is a witness to a personal communication of his, received in a Roman encounter of the seventies, in which he affirmed to have been mistaken about the groups and that he had outgrown the ideas related to them in the fifties and sixties; only after understanding the language of the schizophrenics - he told me - was he in a position to write about the group from a new angle. Which he didn't have the time to do.

However, Bion was already perfectly up to that task; as a matter of fact, his sharp sensitivity regarding the group dynamics had already manifested itself in the description of the group relations taking place between institution and the mystic/genious aspect, relation in which he had seen the possibility of establishing a vital "symbiotic encounter" (1970).

As far group-analysis is concerned, Bion's psychoanalytical thought seems recoverable, however, through a very feasible clear-cut, unforeseen by him probably caused by the scotoma that prevented him from appreciating Foulkes' merit; we are mentioning a recovery that constructively harmonizes Bion's clinical approach with Foulkes' group model phenomenological picture.

For we have to assert that the therapeutic process developed by Bion in psychoanalysis, and at the root of which we can find the unconscious influence of Stumpf, is mainly of a phenomenological nature.

It would be helpful to summarize some of its structural contents, which we will be doing here, drawing them from the text of the Italian Seminars (1977) and from a careful, still unpublished elaboration made by Sonia Neves Langlands, a Brazilian psychoanalyst.

This author has first remembered that, according to Bion, in the analytical situation "wild thoughts" pre-exist somewhere, in search of a thinker: thoughts inherited from ancestors, civilization, the world around us and that, although unable to be thought through immediately, they are gradually transformed into a consistent thought, thus becoming part of the psychoanalytical couple and, in that context, turning into a source of creativity.

This target faces however a continuous risk, that is resisting the pressure of figuring them out through an opposite pressure: not thinking, "making oneself comfortable", in order to preserve the situation already owned, avoiding an unknown path. It also faces the fear of "accommodating" the wild thoughts in one's own mind, turning them into something accessible for others that, however, the receiving group could be unable to contain; thus, the fear of the unknown triggers the recourse to the tight clinging to one's own memories, the tension due to the need of determining in advance what will happen, of grasping one's own wishes and for immediate understanding, finally of facing one's anxiety at the idea of depending on others.

Overcoming this fear is indispensable, since the growing process lies exactly in the comparison with others, in the sharing; but in order to do this, it's necessary to put oneself in a "dream state" that doesn't however cause a disconnection between oneself and the external stimuli; and once this stage is reached, to learn with the patients how to establish a "creative bond".

The abstention required for this purpose mainly consists of not determining a time for the solution of problems that arise; as this approach would lead to providing "any answer", thus serving the illusion of omnipotence and omniscience, which wouldn't be of any help for this work in any way. On the contrary, the objective is waiting for the "transit" from a more fragmented state of mind (PS), to a more structured one (P), thus transcending the gap lying between them and also the one separating one person from another.

Patience is therefore what characterizes the style of the analyst and that allows him to tolerate, with no feelings of persecution, the frustration and pain caused by scattered facts, with the only possible attitude in this situation, that is training his imagination for the purpose of producing a new form: the ability of seeing what wasn't there before.

This is a way not of reaching the truth that can never be reached, but it's a way of drawing it closer by seeking it continually, and knowing it in its plurality, in the internal groupality of the uncountable possibilities offered by the patients; only by

doing this can the various separated parts of oneself and others be allowed to gather and establish a mutual contact.

Interpretation, but particularly construction (Freud, 1937) then produces a transformation in oneself and others; and this in such a way that it doesn't prevent other transformations from following one another, thus making the analytical process always a dynamic one, as a constantly burning.

Mentioning the preceding passages from the huge psychoanalysis literature left by Bion has been necessary for this reason: dedicated to dual psychoanalysis, they apply in their totality to group-analysis where they find their best and deepest meaning.

All affirmations among those remembered correspond indeed, with the highest precision, to the group-analytical processes described in the field of Foulkesian phenomenology, and find a perfect connection with them.

In fact, it's in the dynamic structure of the analytical group that "wild thoughts", emerging from the personal dimensions of the various components, have more freedom; and its primordial structure (Usandivaras, 1986) is the place where their cultural, trans-generational roots emerge from.

Activated by the structural dynamics, these thoughts break through the fogs of a past considered unrecoverable, frequently through the contribution of a group component who hasn't experienced them personally; and one single individual digs out again events belonging to others.

For this very reason, the group setting triggers in a specific way the fears that untamed thoughts may be revealed to others, it also triggers the anxiety of losing what's known and of facing the unknown, and also the members' compulsion either to "want to forget" something that one of the many doesn't want to reveal or, on the contrary, to "want to remember" what happened to one's own group or what belongs to a different group, or still, to "want to wish" something and to "know" right away what is going on.

The group's typical attitude, even more so than it occurs in dual psychoanalysis is then the assumption of that "negative capability" described the first time by Keats (1817) with the following words: "when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason".

This negative capability has been applied by Bion to the analytical couple (ref.1970), but finds a far better setting in group analysis: where the leader is even discouraged from interpreting (waiting for the group to figure out their own interpretation); where patience is extremely necessary in front of the incomprehensible (typical result of the complexity of the group); where one frequently remains speechless (with a blank mind) due to the numerous gaps characteristic of the group; where the fragmentation reaches its maximum and is quite concrete because of the presence of many scattered subjects; and where, more evidently than anywhere else ever, an intolerable experience on a personal level is turned into something tolerable, thanks to the presence of a "container", since it's supported by the totality.

A privileged relation of container\contained that must simultaneously unfold in the analyst and the group patients, even though it's initiated by the former.

This is how Sonia Langlands expressed herself in this regard: "it's necessary for me to participate in the relation with my patient on one hand, and on the other hand to have enough humility to show my patient that he can do without me, so as to leave room for the thoughts that he may wish to experience on his own".

Words and principle inspired by the context of the dual analysis, but that find their wider application in the group setting.

The phenomenological attention for the invisible, that harmonizes in the group, the request that the leader be a participant totally similar to the other components of the group, a "nodal point" of the field, and the "democratic" management of the Foulkesian group, perfectly express all the processes that have been remembered, reaching that open dream-state that powerfully facilitates communication. A dream-state in which the group has been assimilated more than once.

5) To conclude, we can affirm that Bion's summit and his impact on dialectics between alfa and beta elements constitute the most authentic and complete theory of Foulkes' summit: the group-analytical theory that a number of people have blamed him for not being able to or not knowing how to elaborate.

Which certainly doesn't mean that psychoanalysis and group-analysis should coincide; rather, it means that the "group dynamics" described by Bion are part of the latter, to belong to its basic matrix, and that Bionian analysis, in the depth of the psychoanalytic process, can be seen as the necessary component for the "symbiotic" encounter "between Bion's and Foulkes' thoughts.

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Leonardo Ancona is a Psychiatrist, Psychoanalyst, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry (University Cattolica of Rome) and Group-analyst. Analytic Balint group leader, Honorary President of SIPs, AIEMPR, COIRAG, CERCHIO.
E-mail: leonardo.ancona@fastwebnet.it