

The symmetrical synchronic fractal transformations, T(F(SxS)), in the oscillation work between the individual unconscious and the collective unconscious

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Abstract

In this article, the author tries to present to the scientific community a fourth type of transformation to be added to those already proposed by Bion in Transformations (Bion 1965); this proposal is based on the integration suggested by the individual and group clinics of the points of view of four authors: Jung and Neumann, Bion and Matte Blanco, according to the model of a four-party foundation. The result of this integration is guaranteed by the simultaneous operation of several specific organizers: the principle of symmetry, synchronicity as a principle of acausal connections, the infinite sets represented by fractal objects, the super dimensional and transcendent vector spaces, the coincidence at a certain level of symmetrical depth between the individual and collective unconscious. The symmetrical synchronic fractal transformation then becomes dynamic lines of force, on which the course of the analytic field (individual, group, and institutional) unfolds in its predictable and unpredictable manifestations, antecedents, coinciding and consequent to the strict domination of the therapeutic path and transversely concerning various setting devices.

Keywords: transformations, field, the principle of symmetry, synchronicity, primal relationship of child to mother

The unconscious powers are still inauspicious and obviously expect more work and a deeper insight from the dreamer before she can really venture across. (Jung 1943, page 102).

She cannot yet leave the neurotic situation, because the dream gives her no positive indication of any help from the unconscious. (ibidem).

I will therefore add two further dreams, this time of a young man, which illuminate another and more favourable side of the unconscious. I do this the more readily since the solution of the problem of opposites can be reached only irrationally by way of contributions from the unconscious, i.e., from dreams. (ibidem).

Diremo che *lo spazio è funzione del tempo*. Il tempo scorre indipendentemente dalla nostra volontà ed è pertanto, la *variabile indipendente* mentre lo spazio assume la caratteristica di *variabile dipendente*. (R. Ferrauto, 1989, page 5).

We will say *that space is a function of time*. Time goes by independently from our will and is, therefore, the *independent variable*, while space takes on the characteristic of a *dependent variable*. (my translation from R. Ferrauto, 1989, page 5).

Part 1: theoretical considerations

In ‘*Symbols of transformation*’ C.G. Jung so writes about the mythical idea of the “solar phallus”, pronounced by a hospitalized patient:

I have already given one example of a mythological statement (the solar phallus) coming alive again under circumstances which rule out *any possibility of direct transmission*. The patient was a small business employee with no more than a secondary school education. He grew up in Zurich, and by no stretch of imagination can I conceive how he could have got hold of the idea of the solar phallus, of the vision moving to and from, and the origin of the wind. I myself, who would have been in a much better position, intellectually, to know about this singular concatenation of ideas, was entirely ignorant of it and only discovered the parallel in a book of Dieterich’s [*Eine Mithralsliturgie*] which appeared in 1910, four years later my original observation (1906). This observation was not an isolated case: it was manifestly not a question of inherited ideas, but of an inborn disposition to produce parallel thought-formations, or rather of identical psychic structures common to all men, which I later called archetypes of the collective unconscious. (Jung, 1952, page 157).

The modality by which Jung “realizes” four years later, that the patient of the clinic was pointing out something concerning the collective unconscious seems fundamental to me for various reasons: the first reason concerns the intuition theme in Jung and Bion, the second one concerns the clinical phenomenon that I will define “symmetrical synchronic fractal transformations”, to be added to the transformation groups individuated by Bion and that I will try to present to the scientific community. In my opinion, intuition is the instrument by which our subjectivity gets in touch with the holistic Gestalten it belongs to, in which it is contained or of which it is an unaware container, or those passing through and transcending it.

In the mentioned passage of ‘*Symbols of Transformation*’, Jung narrates how shocked he was that the patient said something surprising and interesting in the hospital. But he does not have access to a reference frame to collocate this ‘something’, to pick its meaning. It is as if Jung intuitively, in a moment that we can define “time 1”, picked something and realized that it could be useful in the future, even not precisely knowing for what. Four years later, in a time that we can define as “time 2”, Jung “meets”, bumps in (in ancient Greek: τυγχάνειν, meet, bump into coincidentally) the text of an expert of Mithraic rituals. At this point he “recognizes”

that the patient's conversation, was a realization, an example of the archetypal subject matter of the Mithraic ritual; he can position the undefined intuition in a context of reference, therefore neutralizing the doubtful internal oscillation, the uncertainty he held inside, to which perhaps he did not pay attention anymore.

Now let's get to Bion's '*Attention and Interpretation*', in chapter 2, when he is taking care of patients in whom intuition is a mental function working properly or defectively. The author says that "patient A", at a particular moment of the analysis,

could buy no ice-cream. Six months later he says he cannot even buy ice-cream. Three days later he mentions his being too late to buy an ice-cream: there was no ice-cream left. Had I known, when the topic was mentioned first, what I know now I might have noted the time and place of the reference, but I did not know and therefore could not attend to this statement or note it. When I did, it was because of the obtrusive "I scream" theme. It was later still that I grasped the significance of "no I-scream". (Bion 1970, pag.13).

The theme of the 'I scream' belongs to a well-known English nursery rhyme, based on the different meanings that the same sounds of different words can mean: I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice-cream (1). For our thesis, it is appropriate to underline the matter posed by Bion, about the casual or less casual interference of the reason for the I scream ice-cream, thanks to which Bion grasps, realizes, and recognizes that the O of the patient has to do with an Origin (2) moment of his relationship with the breast. Bion narrates that the whole analysis with this patient was an expansion in the time of a unique temporal moment.

As it can be seen in both the cases narrated by Jung and Bion, there is "a time and a space 1": the ward where the patient of the solar phallus in Jung's case; the analysis room, where he worked with the patient A in Bion's one; and "a time and a space 2": the meeting with the Mithraic ritual expert study, for Jung; and the casual interference of the motif of the I scream for Bion, that produced the collapse of a kind of oscillating wave function that was activated in the minds of the two authors; maybe the wave was left suspended for years, and thanks to these "casual" interferences, collapsed in a direction that shows the result of the intuition: in Jung's case, the discovery of the collective unconscious, in Bion's case, the discovery that the whole analysis was the expansion of a unique temporal moment. In time 2, the thunderbolt enlightens everything, according to the Heraclitus of fragment 9 of 'Dell'Origine' (Heraclitus 1993, page. 50 edited by A. Tonelli), and everything appears under a new light.

Now, commenting Matte Blanco's work (1975) 'The Unconscious as infinite Sets', the author says that when the symmetry principle (3) operates, it treats the

asymmetrical relationships as if they were symmetrical (and the author cannot tell us *when this principle do enter in action*), the part of a set, an own underset (4), becomes equipotent to the whole set in which it is contained, creating a paradoxical condition, in which the own part becomes an infinite set that hosts it, equal to the relationship that ties, for example, the set of the pair numbers $2n$ to the set of the natural numbers n .

According to the mathematician Dedekind, mentioned by Matte Blanco, << A set is infinite when and only when it can be put in bi-univocal correspondence with a proper of it >> (Ibidem page. 33) (5). Under these particular conditions, defining the burst of the unconscious logics, called symmetrical, in the asymmetrical functioning of consciousness - and therefore the entrance in the infinite sets, a situation that Freud defines the primary process - according to Matte Blanco, the physical dimensions of time and space do fail due to the abolishment of any form of sequential ordering, and orderings, sequences, causes and effects (6) are not possible. Once the causal links and the potential spatiotemporal systems are abolished, we enter the dimension of the acausal links (Ibidem page 12), that is, Jung's synchronicity. In order to represent the not representable, the so created symmetrical suprapersonal space - a space that is not affordable by the senses because it is dimensionless and timeless - Matte Blanco uses the metaphor of the vector spaces of a dimension larger than 3, proposing to the reader the attempt to figure out the configuration of the three-dimensional corner of a four-dimensional solid (Ibidem ch.32): such an entity is difficult to represent in our mind, that usually works only in a three-dimensional space.

At the beginning I was not able to catch the implications of this last discourse of the author, but later, when deepening the mathematical questions related to the infinite sets and investigating the symmetry principle, I was convinced of the validity of his suggestion, thanks to the fact that I simplified his four-dimensional example, with the one in three dimensions of a corner of a three-dimensional solid intersecting the flat surface on which it lies (7).

This kind of analytic geometry argumentation is recalled by Bion when he refers to the Flatland universe, Edwin A. Abbott's novel (1884) that narrates the life of an inhabitant of a hypothetical bidimensional universe that comes in contact with the inhabitant of a three-dimensional universe.

Perhaps Matte Blanco with his discourse about the four-dimensional solid, wanted to suggest that our senses and the three-dimensionality of the space that surrounds us, are contained in a "parallel symmetrical" field that is aspatial and timeless, and that *transcends our knowledge and the capacities of our senses*. But he wanted first of all to introduce the holistic concept of biological functioning according to two different kinds of logics. The primary process was the epiphenomenon of the activation of the symmetrical logics. But what we are interested in, is the *intersection* possibility, thanks to the phenomenology of intuition, between our consciousness, as beings belonging to a three-dimensional space, and entity-configurations belonging to the symmetrical-synchronistic field of size larger than 3, that "transcends us".

This is a central aspect for the intuition and the symmetrical-synchronic fractal transformations. Coming back to Jung and Bion's examples as mentioned at the beginning, both in my opinion, operate and move according to this kind of transformation: in other words, they are unconsciously part of them, they are crossed through, contained, and transcended by them.

Following the examples with which I opened my study, somehow, in the relationship with their patients, the two psychoanalysts, in *space and time 1*, enter an intersection and resonance with a configuration-movement belonging to another dimension that transcends their senses and their capacity of grabbing it at that moment (8), from which they seem to detach to *space and time 2* (even far away from space and time 1), thanks to the intuition and the recognizing of a discovery and with the collapse of the wave function we spoke of above. But we should think that it is not Jung or Bion who enter the intersection with these transcendent configurations; it is instead the case indeed that the movements and transformations of these configurations and transcendent spaces do meet and intersect Jung and Bion. In this way, we can allocate the well-known Bionian assumption of the act of faith (Bion 1970, page 35) in a new theoretical frame of reference, with the faith in evolution and the transformation in O, thanks to the oblivion of memory and of the desire to "get themselves in unison with O" (9).

Since Matte Blanco reinterprets all the primary processes according to the two well-known principles of symmetry and generalization, we can say that all the shapes taken by the primary processes (absence of mutual contradiction between the various impulses, displacement, condensation, absence of time, replacement of the external reality with the psychic one, to which we add the slips, the emotional tonality complexes and the phenomena of the category of the Numinous (10)) do act as a "door", as a stargate and as a contact barrier for the "unconscious way of being" that in this case includes, as Jung says, both the personal and the collective unconscious; thanks to the disappearance of the causal links and thanks to the synchronicity phenomena, at a certain level of symmetry the personal and the collective unconscious loose the line that separates them topologically and get to coincide.

Considering corollary 1 of the generalization principle, shown below,

11) In the choice of classes and of higher and higher classes the system Ucs. shows a preference for those propositional functions which in one aspect constitute increasing generality and in others keep particular characteristics of the individual thing from which they started (Matte Blanco, 1975, page 38),

we can say that among all the generalization possibilities that an individual thing offers, the unconscious system chooses some and sets aside others (it selects 'selected facts' in Bion's terms). Recalling Jung's patient in the hospital, we can say that the unconscious mind, even if fallaciously observed by the conscious mind, notices, selects, identifies, chooses a particular aspect of a complex configuration, the solar

phallus for example, and omits all the other aspects of the Mithraic mythology; it generalizes it and inserts it like an unexpected graft, inside a shared conversation, so that the appearance of this graft in the communication, at once sounds as something strange, alien, far away, equal to the slip mechanism. At the beginning of his discoveries, Matte Blanco did not know the conditions of the bursting of these grafts. Still, going forward in his research, he was able to recognize that the activation of the principle of symmetry and generalization was connected to a strong emotional tone. Based on the direct clinical experience, we can think that, in operating this emotional choice, the unconscious system is guided, beyond the strong emotional tonality, by a particular complex-phantasmatic sensitivity, so when generalizing, it chooses the features that best fits the overall sensitivity (hypochondriac for example) or the libidinal fixations and certain kinds of overstressed unconscious attitude; even deeper but always staying in the implications of Matte Blanco's model, it is the effect of a synchronicity phenomenon.

When considering the relationship between the global analytic field which I define as symmetrical and synchronic, and its local configurations, the starting point for this "conception", in the sense of Bion's grid (Bion 1963, ch.6) came to me from some characteristics of mathematical analysis. Referring to the well-known theory of mathematical functions, the concepts of *growth*, *decrement* and *continuity*, can be expressed either on a large scale, at the global level of the function, or at a small scale, that is in a particular portion of the graphic trend of the function, in a 'near set' of point x_0 , as it is usual to say in mathematical analysis (cfr. Ghizetti-Rosati 1992, page 139, note 2). In the model of the symmetrical synchronic fractal transformations, the recurring configurations that the global field assumes in certain periods (temporal near sets of instants $x_0, x_1, x_2 \dots$) are central in guessing the direction towards which the analytical work is proceeding, but above all, in a Bionian sense, they are susceptible of abstraction and generalization. For example, as we will see in the details of the group clinics, the phenomenon of the Uncanny and the relationship with the double, are recurring configurations, an invariant of the symmetrical synchronic fractal transformations, such as the various collective unconscious archetypes or the Kleinian positions, or the basic assumptions of the group therapies, that in alternating moments of a therapeutic process go back and forth from the background during treatment.

The idea that the analytical field can be informed, in the sense of being put in shape by, the force lines of the symmetrical synchronic fractal transformations, like iron filing on a magnetic field, made me reflect on the dynamics and life trajectory of a patient in a group: Marco.

Marco is a young adult sufficiently capable of intuition but with restrictions in some domains of experience, like the one of the relationships with children for example. After an extended period of great suffering and individual analysis first, and group analysis thereafter, he decides to interrupt the group therapy and move with all the family to a Greek island, to begin a new life. Thanks to a casual meeting with a

historical anthropology book found in a library during summer, in which the archipelago of the Cycladic islands in the Aegean Sea, was considered the originally cradle of western civilization (11), some years later I realized with my patient that his decision to move to the Aegean Island had the meaning of an attempt to re-experience the pre and post-natal Ouroboric dimension (cf. note 2) that for him had been characterized by violent and unexpected incursions disturbing the homeostasis, imposing drastic and extended allostatic conditions (12). The decision to move to Greece was very painful for the patient as well as for the group. It was felt as an abrupt change of trajectory perhaps due to hyperbolization phenomena that made the patient's and the group's life particularly fractal and troubled in that period. With the patient, we agreed that, with him being in Greece, we would interrupt the therapy. Still, after a few months, Marco contacts me because he feels the urge to communicate in some way and with someone, that he was no more able of going on and that he had to do with such intense mood swings that he was at risk of a devastating rupture with the family and with all the other inhabitants of the island, and then at risk to commit suicide. So, we decided to continue the work online, much before the pandemics. We interpreted the overall situation as an attempt to return to, and restore an Ouroboric destroyed dimension, that had transformed itself in an additional break of the Ouroboric group container because this was the deep question of the patient. Somehow life in the city and the intra-group therapeutic situation prevented the deep regression of the patient necessary to return to the Ouroboric dimension of fusionality with nature and with the intra and extra uterine mother. At the same time, the island in the Aegean Sea, the originally cradle of civilization, provided symbolically the optimal conditions for such a dramatic and painful *Nekia* (13) process. The telematics device turned out to be a fruitful extension of the setting to "take for life" this patient and sustain the impact of the archetypal regression in the meanwhile. The therapeutic group's internal and external turbulence, which somehow had pushed hyperbolically the patient in Greece, inducing him to find a small group with whom to manage a restaurant, a small group that was gradually destroyed, in a certain sense had produced a solution of continuity in the life trajectory of this patient and his family, moving them, making them to symmetrically "jump" to Greece.

Talking about the life trajectories of the patients, of the groups, and of the institutions, that more or less suddenly enter in *fractal* turbulence and then lose continuity, by suddenly jumping to other places, so that they hyperbolize, as in Marco's case, we can report here the mathematical model of the regular curves together with the limit concept, of the break-in of the principle of symmetry, all the elements of the $T(F(S \times S))$: as Matte Blanco says (work cited ch.3), the breakthrough of the alien symmetrical logic "suddenly melts" and breaks the continuity and regularity of the conscious function and the life trajectory function of the patients (function in the mathematical sense). These functions can then skip or squirt in a hyperbolic manner very far, like in Marco's case. This break, which can reiterate, mostly with the

experiences of the hospitalization of the most severe patients, can bring the loss of memory continuity and disorientation. The analytic function helps not to lose Ariadne's thread of all these continuity solutions, jumps, and turns with hyperbolization (14). The therapeutic setting and the analyst, in lucky cases, can be configured as guarantors or as "vicarious memory" of the vicissitudes of the life trajectories of the patients, keeping a precious trace of their more or less sudden and unpredictable "moves", that are *fractals* and *not derivable*, in precise terms.

Part 2: group clinic

Marco's story, who is part of a group that is still working, in which the centrifugal hyper-acceleration hyperbolically projects a member away from the group, allows us to extend the model of the T(F(S x S)), of the primal-Ouroboric group organizer, of the homeostasis and the eventual auto and alloplastic deformations, to the group dynamics and its organizers, condition that I "delegate" to a clinical situation of a group held within a public institution, after some of Jung's quotes that will allow us to pass smoothly to introduce Neumann's vertex, and then compare it with some congruent Bionian concepts. Keeping in mind the patient Marco, during his fractal path individuation, let's listen to Jung's words in 'On the Psychology of the Unconscious' (Jung 1943 page 108-110) about a young patient of his:

Consciously he was full of hesitation and resistance; moreover, at the treatment progressed, he constantly showed himself antagonistic and difficult, ever ready to slip back into his previous infantilism. Consequently the dreams stand in strict contrast to his conscious behaviour. They move along a progressive line...the unconscious progressiveness and the conscious regressiveness together form a pair of opposites which, as it were keeps the scales balanced...

...it is necessary to give special attention to the images of the collective unconscious, because they are the source from which hints maybe drawn for the solution of the problem of opposites. From the conscious elaboration of this material the transcendent function reveals itself as a mode of apprehension mediated by the archetypes and capable of uniting the opposites. By "apprehension" I do not mean simply intellectual understanding, but understanding through experience... [think about Bion of 'Learning from Experience']

...I would mention in particular the shadow, the animal, the wise old man, the anima, the animus, the mother, the child besides an indefinite number of archetypes representative of situations. *A special position must be accorded to those archetypes which stand for the goal of the developmental process ...* [my italics, thinking at Neumann (1973) of 'The Child, Structure and Dynamics of the Nascent Personality']

...the meaning and purpose of the process is the realization, in all its aspects of personality originally hidden away in the embryonic germ-plasm; the production and unfolding of the original, potential wholeness. The symbols used by the unconscious to this end are the same as those which mankind has always used to express wholeness, completeness, and perfection: symbols as a rule, of the quaternity and circle. For these reasons I have termed this the individuation process. (Jung 1943, page 108-110).

Although Jung may disagree, my clinical impression is that the therapeutic group can function as a container of such a process of individuation for its members, including the leader. Keeping in mind what R. Kaës says about the organizers of the representation and processuality of the group (Kaës 1996 cap.2), it is my opinion that one of the fundamental archetypes that underlie the processuality, the self-organization and group dynamics is the Ouroboros, in the sense that Neumann makes explicit in his book on the infant's nascent personality (Neumann 1973). In the way of what Jung says about the positive role of the collective unconscious, about the patient that dreams of the Cathedral of Colonia (Jung 1943, page 103-104), now I will present a group in which the violent interference, activated by the synchronic symmetrical field within an institution, which affects the group in the second session, in a highly delicate moment of nascent groupality, results in a pleasant discovery of an Ouroboric container where to settle to let a genitally germinative dimension develop.

Background

In the late morning of a Friday a few years ago, the day of the second group session, after having followed a patient in an individual setting, around 2 pm, *driven by an indefinite and irrational concern*, I headed far in advance of the group starting time (18:30), to the large room (the C room, in which, based on agreements previously made in institutional meetings, the group was supposed to be held) to start arranging the chairs in a circle and create a suitable space for a group meeting. While preparing the setting, an assistant from the daycare center arrived and asked me what I was doing in that room. I told her I was preparing the chairs for the afternoon group. She is a little surprised and says, <<*but here, every Friday afternoon, there is the day center group!!!>>*

So, I replied surprised: how is it possible, if last Friday I did the group right here. <<*No*>>, she said, <<*last Friday we were not there. But the day center group has always been held on Friday afternoons in this room*>>. I was surprised and worried because the managers of the day center attended the team meetings in which the assignment of the group that I was supposed to lead in room C at that time was discussed. Knowing that that day at 2:30 pm there would be a staff meeting in the area manager's room, I told the operator of the day center that it does not seem helpful to me to discuss this here among us and that since in the room of the chief of

the area they have the staff meeting we can bring the matter there, I knock at the door and explain the facts. The head of the department says: <<*you are right; it is my fault; I did not consider the fact that there was a day center*>>. The area manager then intervenes: <<*and what does it do? It means that you will do the group here*>>. A colleague wonders if that room would have been large enough. The area manager answers: <<*if we fit in here, the patients can fit in here too*>>. I replied <<ok>> because the group should have been held in a few hours, and I went away. Since then, the group has been held there. However, this was a traumatic event involving me in a symbiotic and ambiguous situation that had already been present in the institution for a long time, which had a very intense impact on group dynamics, as will emerge in the fourth session that I report here.

Livio: I am very distressed because tomorrow at work, they will entrust me with the task of restructuring everything a bit, which I do not feel able to do at all. The same thing happened three years ago and I was a failure, so I wonder, how did they choose me again? Now I feel very anguished because I feel alone to support of a tremendous job that is difficult to succeed in.

Giovanni: I think they chose a scapegoat; it is evident, they want to make you out and last time they did not manage.

Katia: I wouldn't be so sure, maybe Livio might feel flattered by the fact that they have chosen him again and given him carte blanche, not only did they trust him, but he could choose trusted collaborators so as not to feel so alone and distressed.

Livio, on a non-verbal level, because he becomes a little red and trembles on the chair, seems unable to bear the wait and seems to find himself in difficulty when faced with something that is beyond his control.

Analyst: if Livio comes to the group so worried, maybe it is as if he is bringing a group problem to the group. As if he were looking for support or at least to clarify himself to clarify with us. Not necessarily the situation has to be an occasion to knock him out, rather it could be for Livio the occasion to take responsibility.

A series of very practical and useless tips follow, as if the group was refusing to consider the discomfort of its members as a problem of all the group or the community and was trying to break free of the hassles and thoughts connected to them.

Analyst: when Livio talks about not feeling like taking responsibility at work, it could be interesting for us to understand what kind of work it is: the other time some said they had dreamed, others that they had hallucinations, that are not dreams, but have with these something in common; Katia said she was starting to dream again. Can we think that the work Livio talks about involves dreams and dreaming in a group?

Livio: I do not dream, but I remember a dream I did when I stopped taking drugs, about two years ago. I remember the dream very well: I had written a book. I

remember the book cover very well, with two colors; I am not a writer in my life, maybe the dream tells me I must write. And I remember that when I woke up in the morning, I knew all the story content like a script: there was a father that was a boss, a policeman, and the sons, distressed children because this father sometimes was good and sometimes bad. I was afraid this father could die from one moment to another and I was afraid of dying of cancer.

Silence...

Analyst: this script seems somewhat interesting; ... it probably has to do with the stories of fathers and sons, by which Livio, told us he was very distressed because he finds himself in front of the possibility to take responsibility again, as becoming a father again.

Livio: I am thinking about my son, I am afraid of not being a good father because I have often exposed him to violent family conflicts and my intense anger. Furthermore, I am currently very afraid of dying of cancer; since it happens to so many people, and leaving my child orphaned. I am afraid that if this work goes wrong, I could lose my job and find myself without knowing how to deal with the family.

The group acts as a chorus, reflecting on the fact that it is hard for everyone in this historical period.

Mina: I lost my father when I was a child, which affected me very much.

Mina starts crying but continues telling her story: my father was very strict, a southern master father; he practically would have wanted me to be a boy. This is probably why I have always been a tomboy and as a little girl, I played only with boys.

Nadia gives her a handkerchief. Everybody stops for a moment.

Analyst: maybe Mina's identity problems could connect with the fact that her father wanted a boy and continued to relate to her as if she were a boy.

Everyone agrees that today Mina is very feminine even in how she is dressed, and this thing seems to cheer her up a lot.

Analyst: furthermore, while Livio maybe is busy in the work of the dream, maybe Mina needs to resume a work of mourning. Moreover, I very much agree with what the group has just said about Mina's look, that today, seems to have changed her look, respect the first settings ... I remember very well how at the third preliminary interview, Mina arrived with her hair cut and colored red, and this makes me think about some customs of primitive Australian people, in which the hair cut is connected to the mourning events; that day I was surprised by Mina's red hair color, just like I am now because here in the group many have red hair, Livio, Nadia, Pina, Mina, and Katia is very fair.

All the group members look at each other and mirror themselves in this aspect, and somehow Giovanni and I too, out of solidarity, though we have black hair.

Analyst: *Furthermore, red was associated with witches in the Middle Ages and small communities.*

Katia: *yes, yes, the color of monstrosity, of who had some kind of problem and had to be outcast.*

Analyst: *back in time, precisely because it is associated with the theme of witches, having red hair, and dyeing their hair red, had acquired a meaning connected to women's fear of the feminine. Maybe Mina's father was afraid of women or Mina too is afraid of the feminine in her.*

Mina, entering in an almost hallucinatory state: *I feel myself very near to the church, I feel I need to be saved or to be in contact with something divine. I remember a dream memory: a few years ago, I was in Iran and I fell from a boat in a sea where there were some sharks, and my partner had told me not to lean out of the boat. When I found myself in the water, I was pervaded by the fear of sharks and I quickly swam towards a rock; the flow hit me on the rock and I hurt myself all over; then thinking about the sharks I said: Oh my God, now that it is all full of blood, they will attack me and I clung even more to the rock. My partner then threw the fishing rod at me (Mina mimes with a gesture the episode and throws to me, in the group, an imaginary rope). I left the rock; I took the fishing rod and saved myself.*

The group is upset, speechless, and astonished. After a while, Mina resumes the conversation always in a dream-hallucinatory way.

Mina: *when I was a little girl I played with my sister's dolls; one day, I felt persecuted by a black statuette looking at me. I loved disassembling these dolls and opening them to see what was inside them. During that period, I had pain in my right leg. Once I got the doll that persecuted me, I took off a face skin layer, then the other three layers and I found out that inside this doll there were a lot of pins stuck at the height of the leg that hurt me too. I took them out one by one and I healed.*

At this point I was thinking about what all the group members were thinking, that is a voodoo ritual, I get a sudden cramp in my left leg and jump on the chair to stretch it out saying ah, ah! But in a low voice, in my mind to not perturb the group dynamics I was part of, and even if the group noticed, they kept following Mina. I try to follow Mina and attract little attention.

Mina: *it felt like a voodoo ritual.*

After that, Mina comes back to herself enough.

I suddenly thought of the wound I had made to my left leg as a child and wondered if now in the group is not happening an exchange of roles, identities, and parts of oneself is.

The group is between the upset and the all-normal as if Mina's story was any tale ... and on this, we close.

The cross-section of the group we have just visited, transits us towards some of Neumann's reflections, relating to the breaking out of the original undifferentiated tension in the space of the differentiated consciousness, useful to focus some aspects of our synchronic symmetrical fractal transformation, for how it declines through the group. On page 15 (Neumann 1973) the author says:

Because the ego has not yet developed, the relatedness and Eros-character of the primal relationship is manifested cosmically and transpersonally and not personally. That is why Paradise and Original Home, Round, Ocean or Pond are among the symbols of the remote past. Containment in this cosmic world is an expression of the embryonic form of pre-ego existence, in which the containing mother is manifested in the symbols of an encompassing reality, namely, the unitary reality...In the post-uterine phase of existence in unitary reality, the child lives in a total *participation mystique*, a psychic mother-fluid in which everything is still in suspension and from which the opposites, ego and Self, subject and object, individual and world have yet to be crystallized. That is why this phase is associated with the *oceanic feeling* which repeatedly make its appearance even in adults when unitary reality complements, breaks through, or replaces everyday conscious reality with its polarization into subject and object. (Neumann 1973, page 15)

The dynamics of the fourth session of the group, after having been transferred to the area manager's room in that daring way, almost as if an attack had failed, really seems one of those occasions in which the unitary reality breaks, supplants, or completes the everyday reality of consciousness. After the fourth session, the group dealt with a long period of fractal turbulence in which we had to do with extreme and violent thrusts of the unconscious, that brought two members to attempt suicide and strain the lives of the others. Years later in space and time 2, according to the modalities of the T(F(S x S)), the group after having done a long path together and having modified one's "collective consciousness", begins to be able to reread the turbulent events of the beginning, thanks to the meeting with apparently casual events, as we will see in the following session.

Katia: *we are missing a chair, maybe someone is not coming? Can we sit on the armchair?*

Daniela: *maybe the doctor had not considered me, that I did not come.*

Analyst: *no, Mina and Livio are missing.*

Katia: *Doctor, I am sick. I have these continuous headaches that have even brought a lack of orientation and dizziness, and I am depressed. The other day on the tube when I walked inside there were a lot of people and it seemed as if everything turned around me. Even when I walked out of the tube, I do not know what I would have done if my husband was not there.*

Daniela: *but do you also feel vertigo?*

Katia: *no, luckily no.*

Analyst: *did you have this dizziness yesterday too?*

Katia: *yes, it has been very frequent in these last three weeks.*

Analyst: *what do the neurologists say? It seems that we remained at a sort of impasse.*

Katia: *the neurologists say it is a headache with aura and I should take some antidepressant drugs because they could make me feel good. However, I have a resistance to taking these drugs.*

Giovanni: *well done! If I had taken all the drugs the doctors told me, by now I would have entered the circle of psychiatric drugs, without being able to get out of it anymore.*

Katia: *I am afraid too that if I start taking psychiatric drugs I will enter a circle from which I will never get rid.*

Analyst: *but do you do the headache diary?*

Katia: *no, even if I should do it.*

Analyst: *I think the investigation that the neurologists can make from it is important, and I would not suspend the thing, but here in the group, we can see if another kind of investigation brings us to something else ...*

Giovanni: *listen to me: make as I do, make an examination of minerals, like the one I did. They do some exams like the hair one, then a card with the various results comes out and they give you therapy.*

Katia: *I wanted to go to the homeopath.*

Daniela: *I am sceptical.*

Giovanni: *it is just because I am skeptical that I do. You inform yourself; you check and then you decide. I made tai chi lessons with a famous master and there I saw the aura, of the master that left an imprint on the wall. In any case, they examine the hair and then give you three products. It is forty days since I take them and for a period up to now, I feel very well, in the sense that I do what I want, I work in the morning in one place, then in the afternoon I always work, I do carpentry, I mend things, I buy and sell; in conclusion, I am very active.*

Katia: *but where do I find three hundred euros in this period?*

Analyst: *of course, a thing is making a job you like, and one is making a job you have to do.*

Cristina: *yes, of course.*

Giovanni: *but give it a try. Maybe you find out it has nothing to do with it and that it is another thing, maybe you are stressed from work, coffee makes you sick, your mother told you off when you were a little girl, your sister teased you, or perhaps you were born with forceps you had convulsions and you do not remember. Or measles or you live on an annoying magnetic field.*

Giulia interrupts him surprised: *but I was born with forceps. What do you mean?*

Giovanni: *That being born with forceps is a trauma.*

Nadia: *what are the forceps?*

Giovanni: *it is a metal tool, like a pincer with which if the baby blocks during childbirth, they get him from the head and pull him out.*

Katia: *A long time ago I went to an osteopath because I suffer from cervical too and he said that in his opinion my problems had all begun with this childbirth with the forceps.*

Daniela: *but how do they get you?*

Giovanni does the movement by turning the hand and pulling out

Katia: *yes, I have a hole in my head for this, a part of the bones did not close for the effects of the childbirth with the forceps, perhaps I was already too tall to get out, I weighed four Chilos and eight.*

Giovanni: *But this does not mean anything, even babies of five Chilos and two are born naturally.*

Katia: *but I am very tall.*

Analyst: *but I think the accounts begin to come back even if we cannot put the hand on the fire. Childbirth with forceps is a traumatic event; Do you know that children born with forceps have swollen heads for a while? Of course, a traumatic beginning can make life difficult. Still, much depends on how the trauma is processed and metabolized within a relational and psychic process that lasts over time. Not all people who have suffered an early trauma must feel ill.*

Cristina: *all this speaking about childbirth makes me think that after my Babygirl's birth, I started regressing. This is how I got sick the first time. I thought I was a little girl again, but a suckling and so they hospitalized me. After that, there was the story of the psychologist that made me angry, with the bottle of milk. And she laughs...*

In the following session, Livio realizes that he was born with forceps too, concretizing that dimension of the “double”, characteristic of the symmetrical-synchronic fractal sessions. We had the opportunity to resume the Traumatic Origin question and read again all the group experience as connected to the theme of the Original wound and the Oedipal question.

Before concluding, I would like to point out some of Neumann’s considerations (cited work) from which it can be deduced how the absence of borders and differentiation of the original phase, can be fruitfully approached to Bion’s concept of protomental, in which physical and psychic coexist in an undifferentiated whole, susceptible of development (Bion 1961, ch.5) and to the concepts of psychosomatic breast and corresponding splitting with inversion of the alpha function (Bion 1962, ch.12) and of a place where a breast used to be (Bion 1965, ch.5). In ‘*The Child. Structure and Dynamics of the Nascent Personality*’, Neumann (1973) at page 10 writes:

The term uroboric has been selected for the initial pre-ego state, because the symbol of the uroboros, the circular snake, touching its tail with its mouth and so “eating” it, is characteristic of the oppositionless unity of this psychic reality. Thus, the uroboros as the Great Round, in whose womb center the ego-germ lies sheltered, is the characteristic symbol of the uterine situation in which there is not yet a clearly delimited child personality confronting a human and extra-human environment. This undelimited state characteristic of the embryonic situation is largely, though not fully, preserved after birth.

The nascent group state can be subtended by an Uroboric organizer of the representation of a group, to say it with the Kaës of ‘*L’appareil psychique grupal. Constructions du Groupe*’ (work cited) as can be seen in the first group session that I reported, in which the Original wound, consists in the uprooting of the group from its original container, even if later, after a long period of turbulence, the group settled in its new container (the area manager’s room). Taking up Neumann:

Whereas dual union is guaranteed by nature in the uterine embryonic phase, it emerges after birth as the first need of the mammal and especially of the human child. That is why in all living creatures who come into being inside a mother, the dependency of the small and infantile on the large containing vessel stands at the beginning of all existence (Neumann 1973, page 17).

The patient Marco, of the first group, suffered in the city from the impossibility of regressing to a dimension of total fusion with nature, a situation that he tried to realize on an island in Greece. Going back to Bion’s ‘*Elements of Psychoanalysis*’, the container-contained relationship between a small embryonic creature intra and extra-uterine and large maternal container, and its declination within institutions must

be reconsidered, as well as the relationship between an analytic small group and the institution where it takes place. Returning to Neumann (idem page 17):

Here again the concept of unitary reality, a reality transcending the separation into body and psyche, inside and outside, must be invoked. In this sphere the psyche is so linked with the body and the world that psyche, body and word are not yet distinguishable from one another. Thus in the child's primal relationship with its mother, that which consciousness later tries to keep apart and distinguish as opposites- the physical and the psychic, the biopsychic and the objective- are one.

Think of Bion's protomental and the group session above mentioned, in which the group tension in this early and original phase induces a dissociative phenomenon of loss of boundaries, an undifferentiation that affects and involves, beyond his will, numinously the conductor too; and to how, only a long time later (at time 2), a glimmer of conscience begins to emerge in the group, capable of resuming and re-elaborating the Primal question. Back to Neumann (idem page 18):

The independence of the child as ego and individual, begins at the conclusion of the post-uterine embryonic phase and coincides with its emergence from the strict confines of the primal relationship...Only then, with the partial dissolution of the *participation mystique* between child and mother, does the child cease to be merely a body-Self and becomes an individual totality, possessed of a total Self and open to relationships. With his "true" birth the human individual becomes, quite characteristically, not only an individual of his species but also a part of his group.

And

The child's need to preserve the dual union of the primal relationship, is almost identical with the instinct of self-perseveration...But this is not merely organic or material; as we know, it does not relate exclusively to care and feeding. Loss of the mother or of the person substituting for her is felt less in bodily than in the psychic sphere. It is also manifested in loss of contact with the world, in impairment of the child's automorphism and instinct of self-perseveration, and in the destruction of the first beginnings of an ego-development. The primal relationship is an expression of total relatedness, as is strikingly demonstrated by the fact that its loss of it can provoke emotional disturbances culminating in apathy, idiocy, or even death for a child. The loss of mother is infinitely more than the loss of a source of food. For an infant - even if it continues to be well fed- it is identical with loss of life. The presence of a loving mother who supplies insufficient nourishment is by no means as disastrous as that of an unloving mother who supply plenty of nourishment.(idem page. 20-21)

Concerning the loss of the relationship with the world and the ruin of the child that has lost his original bond, think, in a Bionian sense, about the questions of the loss of the relationship with the meaning of a “place where there used to be a breast” and the inversion of alpha function, as previously mentioned.

Conclusions

From what we have said about the T (F (SxS)), it emerges how the Unconscious in its global and total meaning, the Unconscious with a capital U, to use Matte Blanco's expression, can be considered as an underground initiative pilot (cfr. Jung 1943, page 111) of the configurations that the trajectory that the individual, group and institutional therapeutic paths assumes.

From the point of view of the T (F (SXS)), the recurring configurations that theoretical abstraction has identified more than a century of experience in the various branches of depth psychology (think of Freud's tripartite conception of personality, of the Kleinian positions, of the archetypes of the collective unconscious, of the elements of Bion's psychoanalysis and all the other psychic realities and psychic suffering that the various "psy" movements have highlighted, each from its legitimate apex) must be considered local articulations and declinations, of the *Transformations* of an unconscious global field, which each school of thought contributes to illuminate from its specific vertex.

According to a movement analogous to that which exists in the relationship between local configurations of a mathematical function and its global characteristics, according to the model of the "small" and "large" characteristics of a mathematical function, let us listen to the thought of Neumann (Cit, page 20):

When we say that the ego is based on the Self or that the ego is a derivative of the Self, we are again referring to a function of centroversion. In other words, we are stating a condensation of the phenomenon that the total personality (for which the Self stands as a necessarily hypostatized center) directs, controls and balances all the processes leading to the emergence of the child's ego and its development into an adult ego.

Through the “Junction”, the “Bridge” function consisting of Matte Blanco's symmetrization and generalization processes, we can say that once the individual unconscious has been discovered, it was inevitable that someone would find out the collective unconscious, one being contained symmetrically in the other. Differentiating them has certainly been useful for fine-tuning their various characteristics, but articulating them, will prove to be an even more fruitful and generous treasure, in my opinion.

Notes

- 1) word by word: I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice-cream, but the nursery rhyme is based on the double meaning of the sounds I scream – ice-cream, that being pronounced in the same way, gives origin to the meanings: I scream – ice-cream.
- 2) The use in this work of the word Origin, with a capital letter or a small letter “O”, about how E. Neumann in the text ‘The Child. Structure and Dynamics of the Nascent Personality’, intends this concept to define the first existence conditions in << the initial pre-ego state, because the symbol of the uroboros, the circular snake, touching its tail with its mouth and so “eating” it, is characteristic of the oppositionless unity of this psychic reality >> (E. Neumann 1973, page 10).
- 3) << The system Ucs. treats the converse of any relation as identical with the relation. In other words, it treats asymmetrical relations as if they were symmetrical >> (Matte Blanco 1975, pag.38); so if x is the father of y, y is the father of x, not the son of x. Referring to Matte Blanco’s text (1975), ‘The Unconscious as infinite Sets’ page 38, for an exhaustive treatise of the principle here reported.
- 4) Own underset: any collection made up of objects picked up by a starting set, that is contained in the starting set and is never the same.
- 5) The operating of the symmetry principle makes it possible in a situation in which we have to do with finite sets, that are composed of a finite number of elements but inferior to the number of elements of the initial set and the own part of a set is equipotent (it has the same number of elements) of the initial set, so that the initial set and the own subsets of which it is composed, respectively transform themselves in an infinite set that contains inside itself other infinite sets, correspondent to their parts.
- 6) Compares the corollaries to the symmetry principle, in Matte Blanco’s mentioned text, cap.3
- 7) Analytic geometry in part solves these visualization problems, making “visual” geometry algebraic, as a matter of facts, << having reached the purpose of associating to the algebraic entity a particular geometrical entity, and vice versa, will let us reach another one ... that will have to be the one of setting up (and to solve) geometrically an algebraic problem and vice versa, to set up (and to solve) algebraically a vertex problem. >> (my translation from Ferrauto R. 1989, page 1: << L’aver raggiunto lo scopo di associare all’ente algebrico un particolare ente geometrico, e viceversa, ci permetterà di raggiungerne un altro...che dovrà essere quello di impostare (e quindi risolvere) geometricamente un problema algebrico e, viceversa, di impostare (e quindi risolvere) algebricamente un problema di vertice >>). I report this quote thinking about the importance of the vertex changes in Bion.
- 8) or maybe to say it with Matte Blanco’s principle of symmetry and with Bion’s concept of protomental, they had always been inserted, in the size in which in an

aspatial, timeless, and a casual dimension, identifying an oriented arrow of time has no sense.

9) the question of how to collocate a symmetrical space on which it is impossible to put in order and make distinctions, with a vectorial space that presumes the linear independence of his n (therefore differentiable and enumerable) axes remains open.

10) cf. Jung's text, 'Psychology and religion' (1938) which the argument discussed.

11) Louis Godart 2020: 'Da Minosse a Omero. Genesi della prima civiltà europea'.

12) << The allostatic state is a state of altered physiological activity, ... in answer to the stresses imposed by the changes in the environment. This altered activity aims to maintain the fitness of the physiological systems in response to the change of the environmental situation. Once that this activation has obtained a new level of adaptation, the body comes out of the allostatic state. The allostatic state can be maintained for short periods with adaptive results (allostatic overload) >> cf. Wikipedia and the psychoanalytic concepts of autoplasmic and allopathic deformation. For example, the double bind situations defined by G. Bateson (Bateson 1972, Part III, 'toward a theory of schizophrenia') contribute to generating long-lasting allostatic conditions.

13) In the classical world, the Nekia was the journey to the underworld through which spirits were questioned for divination which can be considered a metaphor for the analytic path.

14) To deepen mathematically the regularity concept, you have to think about Cauchy's convergence criterion applied to succession (cfr. Ghizetti-Rosati page 64-69) from which the concepts of maximum and minimum limit of succession are extrapolated, useful to identify the regularity of succession: a succession results regular, if and only if (therefore with double implication) its maximum limit, minimum limit and limit coincide. The regular of a succession guarantees a definitive acquisition of a certain property, that of heading towards one's limit. This means that from a certain point on, we can guarantee that the succession will behave as expected and that there will not be turnarounds, jumps, interruptions, discontinuity, or hyperbolizations. Still, the succession of points will continue regularly indefinitely, its path to its limit. A fundamental theorem that links functions to sequences (cfr. Ghizetti-Rosati page 94-97) guarantees that all the theorems that are valid for sequences are also valid for the functions. Hence the discourse about the regularity of succession can be generalized to functions. What do we need all this for? To clarify what Matte Blanco intends, when he says that the unconscious bursts into a person's life like an acid that dissolves and destroys what was there before, especially the conscience. Suppose we consider the life trajectory of a person, a group or an institution, or the alpha and gamma functions, like regular curves. In that case, the breaking into the scene of the symmetrical synchronistic unconscious, breaks the regularity of these functions, in different ways: for example, first through turbulence

which transforms the curve from differentiable to fractal (hence the term symmetrical-synchronic fractal transformation) that introducing the interference of infinite sets, makes patients in these conditions, especially those pharmacological that face extreme emotional turmoil and then one or more hospitalizations, can be represented like the functions that lose their regularity: in these more or less extreme life variations, the orientation skills and the thread of one's existence and identity, can break up very easily and sometimes in an irreversible way.

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