16th European Symposium in Group Analysis

ART MEETS SCIENCE

Exploring Challenges and Changes
Lisbon, Portugal

July 29, 2014

Baltasar and Blimunda Meet Evidenced Based Practice

Dale C. Godby, PhD, CGP, ABPP and Melissa Black, PhD, CGP
Group Analytic Practice of Dallas

Portugal's Nobel laureate, Jose Saramago's novel, *Baltashar and Blimunda*, can be read as an allegory about psychotherapy. Blimunda's skill at capturing wills and Baltashar's capacity to harness his anger to advance his freedom are valued therapeutic goals. After viewing brief videotaped vignettes of the same patient being interviewed from a psychodynamic and CBT point of view, we will examine together the ways in which evidenced based practice and the artistry of capturing a patient's will in the service of greater freedom can be placed in dialogue to help us decide the best form of treatment: individual psychodynamic, individual CBT or group analysis?

References

Art meets science. Why does it matter?

> "…not to mention that there is nothing in the world so imprecise as numbers, one says five hundred bricks just as one says five hundred men, and the difference between a brick and a man is the difference that one believes to exist between five hundred and five hundred, and anyone who fails to grasp my meaning the first time around does not deserve to have it explained a second time."
>
> Jose Saramago's *Baltasar and Blimunda,* 281.

AGPA.org *Practice Guidelines for Group Psychotherapy*: A transtherorectical guide to developing and leading psychotherapy groups from the American Group Psychotherapy Association.

Brenner, A.M. (2013). The training of psychodynamic psychiatrists: The concept of "Psychodynamic Virtue". *Psychodynamic Psychiatry, 41,* 54-74.

Burlingame, G. M., MacKenzie, K. R., & Straus, B. (2004). Small group treatment: Evidence for effectiveness and mechanisms of change. In M. J. Lambert (Ed.). *Bergin & Garfield's handbook of psychotherapy and behavior change* (5th ed., pp. 647-696. Hoboken, NJ. : Willey.

Burlingame, G. M., Strauss, B., & Joyce, A. S. (2013). Change mechanisms and effectiveness of small group treatments. In M.J. Lambert (Ed.). *Bergin & Garfield's handbook of psychotherapy and behavior change* (6th ed., pp. 640-689. Hoboken, NJ. : Willey.

Cushman, P. (2013). Because the rock will not read the article: A discussion of Jeremy D. Saran's critique of Irwin Z. Hoffman's "Doublethinking our way to Scientific Legitimacy". *Psychoanalytic Dialogues: The International Journal of Relational Perspectives, 23,* 211-224.

Gerber, A.J., Kocsis, J.H., Milrod, B.L., Roose, S.P., Barber, J.P., Thase, M.E., Perkins, P., Leon, A.C. (2011). A quality–based review of randomized controlled trials of psychodynamic psychotherapy. *American Journal of Psychiatry,168,* I19-28.

Grotjahn, M. (1977). *The art and technique of group psychotherapy.* New Jersey & London: Jason Aronson.

Hamm, R. (1997). Collective will: A reformulation of Otto Rank's theory of personality individuation. *Psychoanalytic Review, 84,* 381-396.

Hoffman, I.Z. (2009). Doublethinking our way to "scientific legitimacy": The desiccation of human experience. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association. 57,* 1043-1069.

Horwortz, L. (2006). Forty years of group psychotherapy at the Menninger clinic *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 56,* 221-243.

Katz, S.K. and Hawley, S. (2013). The value of sharing treatment decision making with patients: Expecting too much? *Journal of the American Medical Association, 310,* 1159-1560.

Larsson, B.P.M., Broberg, A. G., Kaldo, V. (2013). Do psychotherapists with different theoretical orientations stereotype or prejudge each other? *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy, 43,* 169-178.

Leykin, Y. and DeRubeis, R.J. Allegiance in psychotherapy outcome research: separating association from bias. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice,16,* 54-65.

Lieberman, E. J. (1985). *Acts of will: The life and work of Otto Rank.* New York: Free Press.

Lorentzen, S. (2014). *Group analytic psychotherapy: Working with affective, anxiety and personality disorders.* London and New York: Routledge.

Menaker, E. (1985). The concept of will in the thinking of Otto Rank and its consequences for clinical practice. *Psychoanalytic Review, 72,* 255-264.

Radden, J. and Sadler, J. Z. (2010). *The virtuous psychiatrist: Character ethics in psychiatric practice.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Sadler, J.Z. (2009).The instrument metaphor, hyponarrativity, and the generic clinician. J. Phillips (Ed*.). Philosophical perspectives on technology and psychiatry*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Safran, J.D. (2012) Doublethinking or dialectical thinking: A critical appreciation Hoffman's "Doublethinking" critique. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues: The International Journal of Relational Perspectives, 22,* 710-720

Saramago, J. (1998). *Baltasar and Blimunda*. New York: Harvest. [First published in Portuguese in1982 in Lisbon.] English translation by Giovanni Pontiero,1987.

Shedler, J.K. (2010). The efficacy of psychodynamic psychotherapy. *American Psychologist, 65,* 98-109.

Shedler, J.K. (2011). Science or ideology? *American Psychologist, 66*, 152-154.

Stern, D.B. (2013). Psychotherapy is an emergent process: In favor of acknowledging hermeneutics and against the privileging of systematic empirical research. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues: The International Journal of Relational Perspectives, 23,* 102-115.

Stolorow, R. D. & Atwood, G. E. (1976). An ego-psychological analysis of the work and life of Otto Rank in the light of modern conceptions of narcissism. *International Review of Psycho-Analysis, 3,* 441-459.

Thoma, N.C., McKay, D., Gerber, A.J., Milrod, B.L., Edwards, A.R., Kocsis, J.H. (2012) A quality-based review of randomized controlled trials of cognitive-behavioral therapy for depression: An assessment and metaregression. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 169,* 22-30.

Wolpert, L. and Fonagy, P. (2009). There is no place for the psychoanalytic case case report in the British Journal of Psychiatry. *British Journal of Psychiatry, 195,* 483-487.

> "I know that I fall into the unexplainable when I affirm that reality - this notion that is so indistinct - the most exact knowledge possible of beings is our point of contact, and our means of access to things which go beyond reality."

Quote by Marguerite Yourcenar.
Epigram from the title page of *Baltasar and Blimunda*

TIMETABLE

Introduction	20 Minutes
View first interview	10 Minutes
Art as prompter: *Baltasar and Blimunda* discussion	20 Minutes
View second interview	10 Minutes
Science as prompter: Research summary discussion	20 Minutes
Break	15 Minutes
Application	60 Minutes

Where's your subgroup?

1. Science
2. Art
3. Patient
4. Life Experience
5. Practical Wisdom

"We value groups because we believe that individuals are stronger when they are willing to give up some of their isolation and sovereignty in return for being part of the group. If we consider *our* position as group analytic therapists, our 'group'—those with whom we need to relate in order to grow—includes psychotherapy researchers, service managers and commissioners, and service user organizations. We will be stronger (and so, hopefully, will they) if we can engage and communicate openly with these other members of our group."

David Kennard. "Can Group Analysis Survive NICE?" *Group Analysis, 2012, 45,* p116.

Below are the conference's aspirational goals.

Art meets science why does it matter?

Treatment guidelines or individual artistry?

Ending treatment and aesthetic achievement

WORKSHOP IDEAS

First 90 minutes. Below is 70 minutes with giving us 20 minutes play.

The ethereal melodies that have been playing while we gathered are Domenico Scarlatti's. (1685-1757). His melodies redeem the hellish world Saramago describes in Baltasar and Blimunda. Written at the time of the Inquisition they serve as an example of the enduring and healing nature of art. One of the conference themes is "Art Meets Science" and we are hoping today to experientially explore the tension between art and science.

Before we begin we would like to give a few of you a chance to introduce yourself to the group and tells us what made you choose this workshop and what you hope to gain. Maybe we should start. 15-20 minutes. How many are researchers, clinicians, or both?

Show 10 Minutes of Sherry Wickman. 24 yo art therapist, lives with M, F left. Sister moved out. Mild depression and anxiety. Enmeshed. Self sacrificing. Subjegation. Sherry Wickman is a 25 year old art therapist who recently took a job teaching art at a local high school. She is currently living at home with her parents and older sister. One of her professors referred her. She came for therapy feeling anxious and mildly depressed with issues related to the consolidation of her identity.

At intake she took the MMPI, Young Schema Questionnaire, and the Gallup Strength's finder. Her testing indicated someone who is self-sacrificing, enmeshed with her mother, isolated socially with a tendency to subjugate her wishes to those of others. She struggles with feelings of inferiority and inadequacy and is prone to deny her anger. She is intelligent hard working and inquisitive. She completed her undergraduate and master's degree in art therapy in 6 years. She has a genuine capacity for empathy for others, which tends to leave her ignoring her own needs.

She did not meet criteria for Major Depressive Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, or any Personality Disorder. She is motivated for therapy and the question I have as clinic director is should she be seen by a CBT or psychodynamic therapist?

How many of you have read Baltasar and Blimunda? Or something else by Saramago?

Background 15 Minutes

In thinking about our theme of Art Meets Science we see an essential tension between art and science. How can we make use of science without foreclosing too much that is important about the art of group analysis? And on the other hand can we find a way to make use of the emergent and improvisational qualities of group analysis with out forsaking the gains of science. [An interesting question we would like you to hold in mind is would Foulkes practice any differently today with what has been gained from psychotherapy research? if so how?]

To review and for those who have not read the novel we will present a brief summary. B&B is a mystical love story between Baltasar and Blimunda. Baltasar is a soldier who has been traumatized in the war by losing his left hand. He wryly says he is now equal to God, because we never hear about God's left hand. It is always that you will be seated at the right hand of God. There is never any mention of God's left hand. Baltasar falls in love with a woman who has also been traumatized by losing her mother when

she exiled to Angola by the authorities of the Inquisition. There is the overarching role of the constraints of the Inquisition in the background (perhaps an image of an unintegrated harsh superego, or some of us may see the Inquisition as symbol of the Insurance companies or government agencies that audit our work and approve or disapprove funding.). The couples love is blessed by a renegade priest, Padre Bartolemeo Lorenco de Gusmao, who enlists them to build a flying machine to be used to escape from the persecution of the Inquisition. They meet early in the story when they are watching the auto de fa, the burning of infidels at the stake. Their love develops throughout the novel and they meet Scarlatti who has come to teach the King's daughter harpsichord. Scarlatti often accompanies them as they build the flying machine. To make the machine fly, Blimunda captures peoples' wills and places them inside of globes which are attached to the flying machine. This fantastic story is easy to read as what we do in therapy. We hope to capture a patient's will to be used in the service of greater freedom for them. How might you capture the patient's will that we have seen in the tape?

1. How capture the patient's will in therapy?
2. How does love help overcome trauma?
3. How do you help a patient fly and overcome the constraints of their Inquisition.

Turning to science. Let's watch the next clip with what the gains of psychotherapy research might add? 10 Minutes

Science discussion; 15 minutes elicit their ideas**.**

Brief summary of empirical research on group therapy will be difficult, 60,000 academic papers in the last 30 years on psychotherapy research. It would take 13 years to read them all at 1 hour per paper.

Outcome: STG and LTG no difference in change for average patient. BUT for patient with personality disorder LTG better.

Group Processes: Goal, Bond, Task. Lorentzen says "Our study indicates that a greater focus on the individual therapy goals as well as the therapeutic tasks they imply, would improve therapy, as would a stronger focus on the member-therapist relationship. Member therapist alliance was most important early in therapy, while the member member alliance was more important later in therapy.

Change Mechanisms: LTG produced more change in negative attributional style.

Also in the background is the building of the Convent. *Memorial do Convento* is actually the name of the book in Portuguese. Is this a symbol of building the scientific edifice that can consume us all in the process and render a valued religion dead and destructive?

Those are my thoughts of how to use it. Before we get to that we would need to tell the story as I doubt if everyone there will have read it.

Last 60 Minutes for Application back home. How will they use art and science. Specifically using what we saw in the tapes.

BELOW ARE SOME RANDOM STUFF I HAVE COLLECTED THINKING THEY MAY BE USEFULL SOMEHOW.

All through my life I felt like a mountain guide who has climbed many mountains all over the world, alone or with my patients. The mountains, symbolizing the difficulties of human life, are still there, but by now some of us have become experts in climbing them while others got lost, gave up, or had to turn back.

Often I felt like a gardener, a modest gardener, who does not expect his cabbage to grow into roses, who knows that corn is corny, and who recognizes and loves an orchid when he sees one, perhaps once in a lifetimes.

A healthy man is a free man who finally has the courage to be what he is. This is his virtue, and not to be it is his only sin and sickness. I still hope to get there before it is too late. Martin Grotjahn *Art of Group Analysis*

Of those masters, the first was, undoubtedly, a mediocre portrait-painter, whom I called simply H, the main character of a story that I feel may reasonably be called a double initiation (his own, but also in a manner of speaking the author's) entitled *Manual of Painting and Calligraphy,* who taught me the simple honesty of acknowledging and observing, without resentment or frustration, my own limitations: as I could not and did not aspire to venture beyond my little plot of cultivated land, all I had left was the possibility of digging down, underneath, towards the roots. My own but also the world's, if I can be allowed such an immoderate ambition. It's not up to me, of course, to evaluate the merits of the results of efforts made, but today I consider it obvious that all my work from then on has obeyed that purpose and that principle.

From Jose Saramago’s Nobel Speech

If he had never won the Nobel Prize, I would never have heard of Jose Saramago. I have read all of his novels and am captivated by his elegant and beautiful writing. It was with a **mixture of hopeful anticipation and dread** that I read this book: could it possibly measure up to my favorites Blindness and Baltisar and Blimunda. Well I need not have worried, Saramago drew me into his labyrinth from the first sentence. I was reminded of Kafka and Dante's Inferno when reading this story of a lonely public official Senhor Jose who is isolated by istitutions and his work. He represents all of modern humanity in it's struggle to survive emotionally. The book tells of Senhor Jose's attempt to find connections to other human beings, of having to fight all of the barriers erected by modern life. He is the "everyman" of the Twentieth Century. The glimpses of love that he finds during his obsessive quest is enough to transform him into another person. Read the book very slowly to savor the taste of Saramago's prose. He will be remembered as a great writer in distant times.
Comment |

JOSÉ SARAMAGO QUOTES

Don't be afraid, the darkness you're in is no greater than the darkness inside your own body, they are two darknesses separated by a skin, I bet you've never thought of that, you carry a darkness about with you all the time and that doesn't frighten you ... my dear chap, you have to learn to live with the darkness outside just as you learned to live with the darkness inside.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *All the Names*

Today's bread does not eliminate yesterday's hunger, much less that of tomorrow.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

The ear has to be educated if one wishes to appreciate musical sounds, just as the eyes must learn to distinguish the value of words.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

Don’t quibble with the king over pears, let him eat the ripe ones and give you the green ones.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *The Cave*

If I'm sincere today, what does it matter if I regret it tomorrow?

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Blindness*

Blessed be the night, which conceals and protects things fair and foul with the same indifferent mantle.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

No human being can achieve all he or she desires in this life except in dreams, so good night all.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

It is strange how the elderly fall silent when they ought to go on speaking, obliging the young to learn everything from scratch.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

Time is a master of ceremonies who always ends up putting us in our rightful place, we advance, stop and retreat according to his orders, our mistake lies in imagining that we can catch him out.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *The Cave*

People might ask me, What do you propose instead? I propose nothing. I am a mere novelist, I just write about the world as I see it. It is not my job to transform it. I cannot transform it all by myself, and I wouldn't even know how to. I limit myself to saying what I believe the world to be.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *The Paris Review*, winter 1998

Often when you ask for one thing you receive another, this is the mysterious thing about prayer, we address them to heaven with some private intention, but they choose their own path, sometimes they delay, allowing other prayers to overtake them, frequently they overlap and become hybrid prayers of dubious origin, which quarrel and argue among themselves.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

A stomach accustomed to hunger is satisfied with very little.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

A woman is essentially a vessel made to be filled.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

If we cannot live entirely like human beings, at least let us do everything in our power not to live entirely like animals.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Blindness*

We know that happiness is short-lived, that we fail to cherish it when it is within our grasp and value it only when it has vanished forever.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

In a king, modesty would be a sign of weakness.

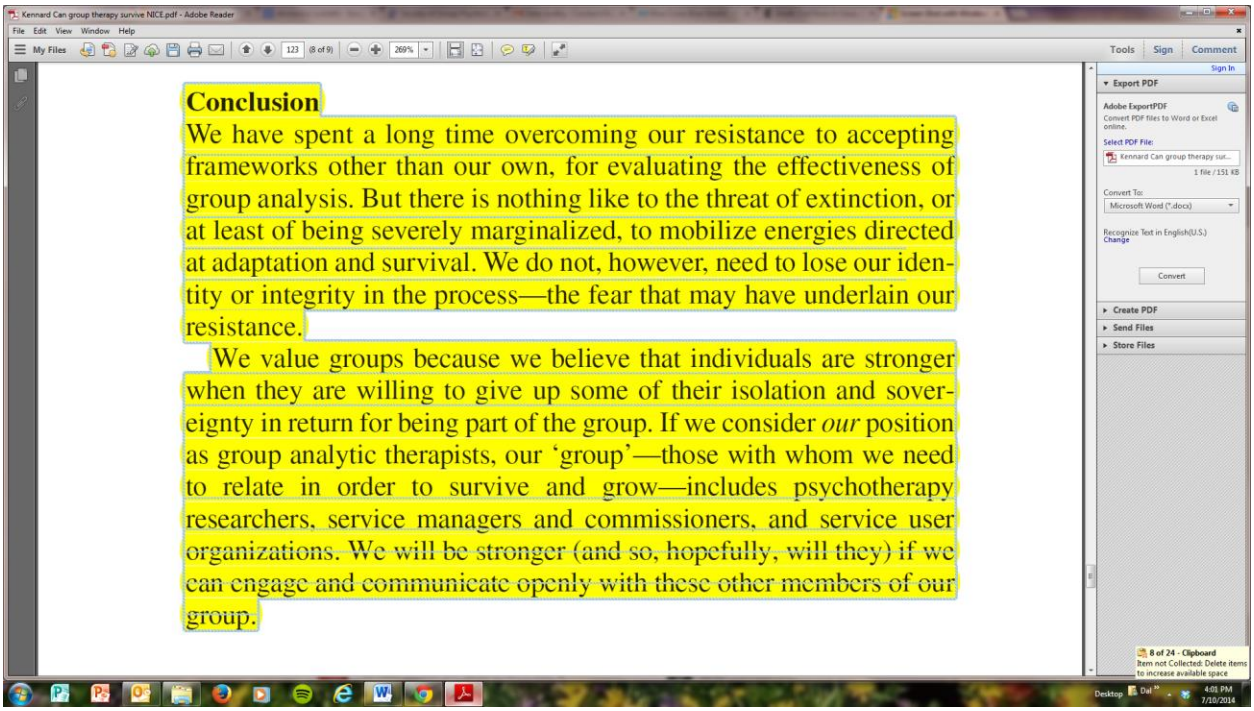
JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

Ah, in every age there is always some new wonder to astound mankind until they grow accustomed to it and lose interest.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimunda*

Everything in this world can volunteer some reply, what takes up time is posing the questions.

JOSÉ SARAMAGO, *Baltasar and Blimund*



Conclusion

We have spent a long time overcoming our resistance to accepting frameworks other than our own, for evaluating the effectiveness of group analysis. But there is nothing like to the threat of extinction, or at least of being severely marginalized, to mobilize energies directed at adaptation and survival. We do not, however, need to lose our identity or integrity in the process—the fear that may have underlain our resistance.

We value groups because we believe that individuals are stronger when they are willing to give up some of their isolation and sovereignty in return for being part of the group. If we consider *our* position as group analytic therapists, our 'group'—those with whom we need to relate in order to survive and grow—includes psychotherapy researchers, service managers and commissioners, and service user organizations. We will be stronger (and so, hopefully, will they) if we can engage and communicate openly with these other members of our group.

Dr. Godby—David Orlinsky, practiced psychotherapy and conducted research on psychotherapy his entire career. In a paper on why he became and continues to be a psychotherapist, he suggests a topic that might be on interest if we could get some of our senior psychotherapists to present on: "**WHY I BECAME AND CONTINUE TO BE A PSYCHOTHERIST".** I hope a brief quote from Orlinsky's paper will be inspiring:

Apologia pro Scientia Sua

How much the foregoing helps to explain "why I (really) became a psychotherapist" I really cannot say. It seems to me that a more interesting question than why I *became* a psychotherapist is why I *remain* a psychotherapist. I never had a full-time practice of psychotherapy and now have just a little because I travel much and am trying (in however much time I have left) to take several long-term research and writing projects to fruition, but I have always felt a strong desire to remain active as a psychotherapist and have tried to be here for those who want to talk with me in that way. Asking why I want to remain a psychotherapist allows me to question my current self in a way that it isn't possible to

question the younger versions of myself (child and youth and young adult), who are available to me now only as half-veridical, half-recreated memories, and as felt presences within me.

Yet this question, now that I pose it, seems just as difficult to answer in its own right, or at least to answer in a way that will not sound strange to many because it is an ontological statement. However, if pressed, I believe I would have to say that I sense something "sacred" in a person (cf. Durkheim, 1915/1965, bk. 2, chap. 8) that I can be near as a therapist. There is a living, radiant *being* at the core of an individual's personality (typically obscured by that personality, which is more or less opaque) with which I recognize and can sometimes realize a deep connection. An enlivening *vitality* resides in that personal core, not fully knowable in itself (hence always a source of mystery) but knowable in qualified, refracted ways through the responses of the individual that flow from it. If approached with sensitivity, tact, respect, and well-disciplined "philosophical" love (such as Plato advocated in Socrates' second speech in the *Phaedrus*), that personal core of an individual is invited to reveal itself more fully and may be willing to meet in the fundamental way that Buber (1965) described as "interhuman" and Charles Williams (1938/1984) described as "co-inherence."

I think that the great and complex work of psychotherapy, however approached, is to challenge carefully and to help remove the obstacles in personality that obscure an individual's vital core and restrict its well-being. All theoretical orientations, in their varied wisdom, offer words and deeds and images that can help in this work. Sensing which will work, when, and for whom—and knowing how to do them—is the essential

art of psychotherapy. Providing facts to inform the practicing therapist's intuition is the part of the science of psychotherapy.

Maybe there is something "religious" about this credo, but if so, I mean it to be religious in the secular, cultural sense defined by Durkheim and the existential, ethical sense defined by Tillich and Buber. In that restricted but important sense, I would even say that doing psychotherapy provides an opportunity to worship, to celebrate our fundamental and energizing interdependence. There are moments in therapy when this energy and human beauty meet (as they do in other forms of creativity and love), and where, when they meet, a healing influence resonates in all directions, into the therapist as well as the patient, and to others closely involved in the patient's life. That seems reason enough to remain a psychotherapist—even if (as for me) one no longer needs to do so.

Envoi

Surely more could be said, but an end must come; I will just quote some words of Erik Erikson (1950, p. 98) that I didn't well understand when I was younger. About the challenge of my present age, he wrote:

It is the acceptance of one's own and only life cycle and of the people who have become significant to it as something that had to be and that, by necessity, permitted of no substitutions. It thus means a new different love of one's parents, free of the wish that they should have been different, and an acceptance of the fact that one's life is one's own responsibility. It is a sense of comradeship with men and women of distant times and of different pursuits, who

have created orders and objects and sayings conveying human dignity and love. . . .Aware of the relativity of all the various life styles which have given meaning to human striving, . . . he knows that an individual life is the accidental coincidence of but one life cycle with but one segment of history; and that for him all human integrity stands and falls with the one style of integrity of which he partakes.

Journal of Clinical Psychology Vol. 61(8), 999–1007 (2005)

Earl Hopper Jul 13 (1 day ago)

to GROUP-PSYCHOTH.

Don't confuse persons with their social systems, or analogies with homologies. Isomorphism is a variable. P/S and D are obviously relevant to persons. Bion understood that ba's were properties of group social systems. They were not merely "extensions" of the psychotic processes of persons. The issue here is that the 4th ba of Incohesion is a response to traumatogenic processes, involving the fear of annihilation, which is pre P/S. Anyway, the main problem is how to develop more mature work groups and how to conceptualize them. Yvonne, Susan and I are trying to clarify this with respect to traumatized societies. I feel that all this is a way of avoiding our fears for the Middle East. Mohammed's participation here reminds us that the Middle East extends beyond Israel. Usually a woman's voice helps us to stay grounded. Earl

IDEAS

Germany planned vs Brazil Improvisational

Prompted by??

1. Patient,
2. Research,
3. Cases,
4. Personal-- **personal experiences and the convictions drawn from them play a significant part in who we are as therapists.** Your own family, life experience. **Privilege??**

Practical Wisdom. φρόνησις, *phronēsis*

Subgroups, are they fcn ie, come together around difference and integrate or dysfcn come together around difference and split