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3rd Theme – The Psycho-Analytic experience and the contemporaneous culture

sub-theme 3e - Psycho-Analysis at the University: the question of the place of Psycho-Analytic knowledge.

Teaching or transmission?

A TYPE OF PSYCHO-ANALYTIC SUPERVISION BORNED AT THE UNIVERSITY

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SUMMARY

Against the skepticism showed by Freud as to the possibility to do Psycho-Analytic practice at the University, I present here a type of Psycho-Analytic supervision borned at the University, based just on Psycho-Analytic clinical work there realized.

This kind of supervision considers the existence of a transferencial field, that is, of an inconscient transferencial plot, including the analyst and the patient, and in whose reference all the events are investigated, those narrated by analyst-supervised and those occurring during supervision. In this way it is avoided to have: exigency of objectives to attain, incentive to a critical and inspectionary vision from the supervisor, the establishment of rights and wrongs, and a relationship between supervised and supervisor of the type authority-learner.

KEY WORDS: “A posteriori”, free association, investigation, supervision, transferencial field.

“...That teaching, it is true, can only be given in a dogmatic and critical manner, by means of theoretical lectures; for these lectures will allow only a very restricted opportunity for carrying out experiments or of practical demonstrations.” (Freud, 1918 1919)

It is by this way that Freud makes reference to the transmission of psychoanalysis at the university, revealing, for one hand, a tendency, pointed out since long time ago (Band, 2000), to dichotomize theory and practice, and, on the other hand, the scepticism with the possibility of the clinic being there. Even if he choosed for not trying to bring the

psychoanalysis into the university, he believes that it could be possible to transmit theory out there, but not the clinic.

Since 1974 I'm a teacher and a supervisor at the Psychology's Department of Puc/Rio, struggling, since then, as much as bitterness and difficulties that any university teacher face it, as well as the specific difficulties that appears when we deal with Psycho-Analysis. Based on my experiences, however, bitterness and difficulties do not stop me to agree with Freud about considering perfectly possible the introduction of the Psycho-Analysis at the University. However, I do not make any restrictions to the clinical work.

Besides that, as long as I was getting experience, smaller became the dichotomy between theory and practice, making me closer to a university praxis, as much as in the theory classes as in the clinic probation. At this point, my works as supervisor were the most emphatic, to the point that I wrote a thesis on my doctor graduation about Psycho-Analytic supervision ^(Band, 1994), where I introduced a specific way of doing it and that, even if it is adopted in general Psycho-Analytic supervision, was born at the University.

I believe that it is never too much to remind that the University is an institution as much conflicted as any other, including the Psycho-Analytic institution. A lot has been written about the inherent difficulties to transmit Psycho-Analysis at the Psycho-Analytic institution, actually popping the question if it is possible to teach Psycho-Analysis psychoanalytically. ^(Mezan, 1988). That maybe allows to consider that the Psycho-Analytic matter is not the University but the instituted.

I'm going to speak, now, about the way I work at supervision. I advance that it is only a conception, without new concepts, and that has as specific, the intention to escape from supervisions that have as basic ingredients:

- to request objectives to be reached

- a critical vision from supervisor, that can cause chasing feelings and defensive attitudes, such as not saying something that can arise critics
- establishment of rights and wrongs to the clinic practice, indicating the expectation of using an adequate “technique”
- a kind of relation like authority-learner, where one experienced analyst says to the beginner analyst how he should act
- an inspection attitude, that is, a specific attention given with the intention that some things can't happen or that some things happen always.

I start by telling that one day I met with an ex-student that was doing her Psycho-Analytic formation at a Rio de Janeiro's traditional institution and grieved, dramatically told me: to get her title of psycho-analyst, the institution was demanding a theoretical essay of a supervised case, treated in a divan, four times a week, and at least for two years. After eighteen months of treatment, her patient told her that was going to interrupt the work; desperate for having to re-start the entire process, and without any warranties that the same event wouldn't repeat itself, she simply "bought" the patient. that is, they made a deal on continuing for six more months, but ... free of charges.

I told this little story, so sad to Psycho-Analysis, because I believe, beyond it, there's the idea of a definition of Psycho-Analytic clinic, based on a “technique”, that means, considering that, to be able to call Psycho-Analysis what is being done in terms of therapeutic work, it would be obligatory to do the work with a divan, without renouncing to a minimum of four sessions a week, and so on.

In several of his clinical papers, Freud emphasized very much the idea that, making recommendations based on his experience as a clinic ^(Freud, 1912) didn't mean that he was trying to establish rules of therapeutic conduct that should be obeyed by psychoanalyst's candidates. He even wrote a paper ^(Freud, 1913) where he states that Psycho-

Analysis doesn't have rules, being then similar to the chess game, in the sense of just having rules to begin. In this, however, I take the freedom of disagreeing with Freud, because I believe that nor for beginning the Psycho-Analysis has rules, since the free association is not a rule, but a method instead; it would be, I believe, equivalent to the group of characteristics that differentiate it other ways any of therapeutic work, just as the description of the characteristics of the game of checkers, for example, serves for defining this game, differentiating it from soccer, that is described by other characteristics.

What would be, then, a clinic that could be called as Psycho-Analytic? For me, it would be the one that would be based on::

- the unconscious operation as foundation of the psychic reality; it is from here that we begin, in searching indications of psychic structuring, and it is there that we want to arrive in terms of searching transformations
- the free association (that Freud called "fundamental rule of Psycho-Analysis) as working method
- the personal analysis as indispensable external reference and where is experienced the access to the unconscious

Some observations can be made on this kind of clinic:

- the concept of free association _freedom given to the patient to associate, being the analyst in a basic attitude of waiting and listening for posterior intervention_ doesn't allow apriorisms, that means, the Psycho-Analytic clinic is to be all done "a posteriori"
- there are several instruments used in this clinic: interpretations, constructions, associations, cuttings, prohibitions, injunctions, etc, seeming to me welcome the attempts of establishing new and each time more creative instruments

- its working field is the transference field, coming from a history that begins with the discovery of transfer as false connection, as resistance, and that extends for several stages till becoming transference field
- free association is not a rule, it is a method, where the inquietudes brought by the patient are the spring propeller of the Psycho-Analytic work; and this is what makes the great difference between Medicine and Psycho-Analysis

Making a quick comparison between the structural characteristics of Medicine and of Psycho-Analysis:

- while in the first one, looking is emphasized, on the second one it is listening-speaking that is privileged
- in Medicine, unlike Psycho-Analysis, there exist technical rules necessary to its good performance
- in that one, the objective is the cure, the remission of symptoms, while in this one, it is only own treatment that is looked for
- in the first one, who drives the process is the doctor and in the second one, as well, it is the psychoanalyst
- it is the doctor who establishes the relationship in Medicine; he begins the relationship process with his indispensable questions, while in Psycho-Analysis, this instauration is accomplished by the patient, since free association determines that the beginning of the work is made by listening what he can bring
- then, the method of Medicine is anamnesis, while the one of Psycho-Analysis is free association

At this point, I believe to be important to remind how psychoanalyst's formation became structured by the Psycho-Analytic institution.

The famous tripod responsible for the possibility of somebody become instituted psychoanalyst, had a long history ^(Band, 1994), ending by being constituted by:

- study and debates of Psycho-Analytic praxis: what has been already thought before us and what we think now
- personal analysis; initially didactic analysis, awkward way of beginning a psychoanalytical history, where the main concern was of care connotation, in the sense that "...character, or personality, of candidate should stay intact..." ^(Kovacs, 1936, pg 98)
- supervision, that is one of the several names given to what was first called control ^(Band, 1994) and that began as the way by which Eitingon, first president of Berlin's Polyclinic _later on Psycho-Analytic Institut of Berlin_, wanted to fiscalize beginners, to maintain the "...reproduction of analytic species..." ^(Stein, 1989, pg 14; Colonomos, 1985, pg 11), that is to say, to guarantee a Psycho-Analysis that is not savage; this, however, didn't stop it to become one more important external referential for internal solidification.

Passing, finally, to direct the interest, in this context, to the Psycho-Analytic supervision, what seems to stay as supporting it, can be summarized like:

- unconscious operation considered as foundation of psychic reality, just as described above; it is from where to start and where it is to arrive
- free association as work method

Some consequences results from everything that was said above, and, when commenting them, there appear the specificities that characterize my conception on the supervision work.

If the Psycho-Analysis were a group of technical engenders to be obeyed, we would have to accomplish our work on a aprioristic way, this means, in way of determining previously what should be done. As it is a matter of the method of free association, that doesn't allow aprioristic ways, that is, doesn't admit to appeal to a technical prescription, it is therefore in a posterior moment *"a posteriori"* to the events, that can be recognized *"that is, to give meaning to"* the structures in action in the working field. An important consequence of that, is that there would not exist Psycho-Analytic technique, that is to say, what is usually called as such, could be considered as the "psychoanalyst's house", fruit of his style, of his singularity.

It can be added to the exposed above, a small history of a concept emphasized as nuclear in the work I propose: the transferencial field. Freud speaks initially about transfer as false connection, as a powerful resistential obstacle, later he generalizes it as existent in all the human relationships, than he starts to see it as the only field of possible fight to try to tie the whale of the unconscious with the bear of the conscience, than notices the existence of the countertransference, obstacle to be immediately removed, although already having as embryo the important entrance of the analyst in the arena and the future obligation of analysis of the candidate to the analyst position; Racker continues this history when considering for the first time the countertransference as interpretative element, although still reactive; Heinman gives a great jump when speaking of countertransference as gathering all the emotions of the analyst and not just as a reaction to the transfer of the patient, arriving to Lacan and Silvestre that knock it down of its pedestal saying that it's an conceptual improperly and an imposture, chosing to work with a transferencial field, that is to say, with the unconscious transferencial plot embracing analyst and patient (Band, 1994).

This transferencial field, since Psycho-Analytic method is free association, is established by the patient and therefore based on his idiosyncrasies. Besides that, and

mainly, in this kind of Psycho-Analytic supervision, the existence of rights and wrongs is not accepted for what is done by the analyst and that he describes at supervision's meetings; everything that is there exposed _or there occurred_ is considered as concerned to the transferential field, trying to understand them as consequences of the unconscious plot of this field.

As a consequence, it is not said: "do like this", "you shouldn't have...", "take this to your analysis", since everything is considered _read_ as being part of the unconscious plot of the transferential field. It is a methodological decision, because, it is clear, any of the referred events could be read in a specific way if narrated, for example, at the analyst's personal analysis instead of being at his supervision; there, at the supervision there is interest only at the possibility of association to the transferential field.

If we believe that, by the instauration of the relationship, that is, through the free association, it is the unconscious structure of the patient that commands the structuring of the transferential field, everything that is referred to it _transferential field_ is good to the investigation of the patient's unconscious functioning; even when one stops doing this, he will try again to search for explanation at the transferential field, considering the apparent "fault" as due to the unconscious plot of that field.

Then, what is effectively made is a search, an enigmatization, a permanent investigation, of a unconscious structure typical of the transferential field. Saying in another way, we always try to set up a structuring meaning _considered always as temporary_ to join the several datas from the clinical work, hoping to use the Psycho-Analytic instruments available, in an appropriate way to the structure of psychic functioning of the patient.

As any events, even the ones referring to the analyst _a fault act perceived at a supervision's meeting, for example_, are considered as concerned to the transferential

field; like this we will not have, at supervision, the analyst's singularity investigated, and so this work becomes less persecutory, and the analyst-supervised have no need to defend himself, what permits that he "confess" things that he would not admit in a supervision that accepted to look for certain events as being of the order of its singularity, even if rejecting them, for example, speaking about the need of differentiating what belongs to the analyst and what belongs to the patient.

By this way, besides propitiating less persecutory feelings, and since the supervisor doesn't criticize the analyst-supervised's decisions, there is not demand of objectives that have to be reached, there is not expectation of finding an "appropriate technique" that would establish rights or wrongs therapeutic actions, the relationship between supervised and supervisor doesn't have as model the relationship authority-learner, because the supervisor doesn't fall back upon his possible larger experience to indicate to the supervised how he should act, and, last but not least, there is not an inspectional attitude.

In my experience, this works very well with groups, everybody participating equally of the investigative efforts, each one with his own possibilities.

TEXTS UTILIZED

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