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**Sense development through
non verbal signs:
early infancy and clinical psychoterapy**

Tesi di Dottorato

di

R u b e n s K i g n e l

Coordinatrice:
Prof.ssa Patrizia Violi

Relatore:
Prof. Maurizio Stupiglia

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Sense development through non verbal signs: early infancy and clinical psychoterapy

Memory believes before knowing remembers.
Believes longer than recollects, longer than
knowing even wonders.¹

Summary

This thesis will describe the development of a relationship which is not necessarily verbal, but which generates communication, creates sense and meaning between human beings and produces “becomings”² in the body that feels, perceives and physically transforms itself. This leads to a biosemiotic³ understanding of both the seen and unseen figure⁴.

The first section of this thesis will focus on the studies of psychoanalysts and researchers Daniel Stern, Edward Tronick and Allan Shore on the

¹ Faulkner, William, *Light in August*, Smith & Haas, USA, 1932

² “Becoming” or in the original French “Devenir” is a ontological concept of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guatarri. It is a meeting of two forces that at the same time create the phenomenon of territorialization and deterritorialization. They call them the major and the minor forces, in the Major we find for example: man, occident, adult, human, voluntary, etc and in the Minor: Woman, child, orient, animal, involuntary. “Becoming” would be the possibility of the meeting of these forces. The meeting can be inside one person, or can be from interior to exterior, as for example with the mother and baby, when the mother becomes the baby in her being and the baby becomes the mother in his being.

³ Biosemiotics (from the Greek *bios* meaning "life" and *semeion* meaning "sign") is a growing field that studies the production, action and interpretation of signs in the biological realm. Biosemiotics attempts to integrate the findings of scientific biology and semiotics, representing a paradigmatic shift in the occidental scientific view of life, demonstrating that semiosis (sign process, including meaning and interpretation) is its immanent and intrinsic feature. The term "biosemiotic" was first used by Friedrich S. Rothschild in 1962, but Thomas Sebeok and Thure von Uexküll have done much to popularize the term and field. The field, which challenges normative views of biology, is generally divided between theoretical and applied biosemiotics, with the former dominating the latter. From: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biosemiotics>.

⁴ Seen figure is the more apparent. Unseen is the one we have inside, either represented mentally or how the body feels inside. There might be a dichotomy between the outer and the inner image.

mother/baby relationship. Some of these studies are theoretical others are empirical, and still others combine data and theory. Videos of mother/baby interaction will demonstrate the nuances of pre-verbal communication. This enables us to see the development of meaning through both frozen and moving postures. We can then see how this development is connected to character formation. Resonance and empathy are two factors which have been shown to affect the formation of subjectivity and they will be important factors examined in this work. Concepts of the neurophysiology of emotions, developed by Jerome Liss, Maurizio Stupiggia and Rubens Kignel are important for understanding how the verbal and non-verbal dialogues influence or even determine the formation of character.

The second section of this thesis will present the work of certain body psychotherapy researchers: Alexander Lowen, Stanley Keleman, David Boadella, Gerda Boyesen and John Pierrakos. From their work there emerges an understanding of human postures, figures and the well known “body schema”⁵. Psychologically, this concept refers to the evolution of learning and personality in the body which begins to form the basis of a self. We will see that inter-subjectivity begins in the pre-verbal period, but already formed in a semiotic manner.⁶ We will demonstrate that relationships provide the stage for the formation of character. We will explore how the body is a tabula rasa and the future basis for the organization of meaning.

The third section of this thesis will establish a connection between the concepts of relational psychotherapy and the concepts of semiotics involving communication and sense which develop through non-verbal signs⁷. Through

⁵ Body schema is a representation of a pathological body in adulthood, according to Body Psychotherapy research.

⁶ According to Patrizia Violi with whom I agree: “*ontogenesis is perhaps the only situation in which we can witness through a direct and not speculative means, the spontaneous growth of both semiosis and consciousness. In the development of the newborn the process of semiotization cannot really be separated from the process of subjetivation and the emergence of consciousness. In a way, to become a subject is to become a semiotic subject. Semiosis and consciousness are in ontogenetic development, linked to one another.*” in Violi Patrizia, *Distributed intersubjective semiosis: ontogenesis, consciousness and semiosis*. Universtiy of Bologna, 2007.

⁷ “*The sign is implicitly regarded as a communicative device taking place between two human beings intentionally aiming to communicate or express something....according to Eco, natural*

the theoretical and empirical process we will construct a study that may be useful in the understanding of mother/baby relationships and serve to improve parental education. It is clear that good-enough parenting helps avoid psychological problems in adult life. This process might be called psycho-semiotic⁸, in the sense of taking into consideration the development of a human being where semiosis grows together with psychosomatic development. The empirical research will also explore relationships between adults in the psychotherapeutic setting. This will allow comparison of mother/baby relational activity and that of adults in this therapy setting. This, then, provides an opportunity to mediate development between adults. The understanding of the psychotherapeutic communication in the clinic will be explored through the experience and texts of Gilberto Safra and of Stephen Johnson.⁹

and unintentional signs, such as medical symptoms, only become signs when they indicate inferential activity or, in other words, at the moment in which they become interpreted as such by a human agent. Consciousness is thus required, so to speak, only at the tail end of the semiotic chain, i.e. on the part of the interpreter, but it does not need to characterize the production of something that may become a sign only after a "conscious" process of interpretation. Signs by themselves might be unintentional or unconsciously produced, but the process through which we attribute meaning to these signs are not" from Violi Patrizia, Distributed intersubjective semiosis: ontogenesis, consciousness and semiosis. University of Bologna, 2007.

⁸ Darrault, Ivan, *La Semiotique du Comportement: L'Ethosemiotique, La psychosemiotique*, Questions de sémiotique, sous la direction d'Anne Hénault, aux PUF, 2002

⁹ Teacher and clinical researcher from the University of São Paulo, Brasil.

‘Field of Semiotics’ applied to Psychotherapy

The river’s love

After Narcissus died, Oscar Wilde said, all the flowers on the riverbank were disconsolate and asked the river for some drops of water with which to cry.

“Ah,” said the river, ‘if all my drops were tears I wouldn’t have enough to cry for the death of Narcissus. Because I loved him.

”How could you not love him,” said the flowers, “he was so beautiful”

“Was he beautiful?” – asked the river.

And who could know that better than you?” said the flowers. “Every day he would lie down on the bank and look at his beauty in your waters.”

“But that wasn’t why I loved him,” said the river.”

“Why then?”

“Because when he lay down, I could see the beauty of my waters in his eyes.”¹⁰

1. Introduction

A young woman being treated in psychotherapy by the dynamic relaxation method noticed a remarkable acceleration in her heart rate during a session. During the subsequent days, whenever lying on her back, in an effort to induce herself to relax, her heart again began to beat faster and faster, as if in a desperate attempt to overcome some obstacle.

This patient had been in this kind of combination therapy for a considerable period of time, and it could be deduced from previous knowledge that, in all probability, a strong underlying childhood experience was preventing her from relaxing. She felt, however, that to continue in this way could be dangerous to her heart, reacting as it was to an emergency situation which she did not feel free to let herself out of. She was aware moreover, that her complete childhood pattern could only emerge in a regular therapeutic session, since she would not permit herself the necessary regression in her everyday surroundings, where she was out of sight of the therapist who would support and understand her.

What happened in the next session was that the therapist loosened the underlying hung-up and repressed emotional pattern by provoking free abdominal respiration through working on her jaw.

¹⁰ Carriere, Jean-Claude, *Contos Filosóficos do Mundo Inteiro*, Ediouro, São Paulo, Brazil, 2008 – my translation

Afterwards, lying on the couch quite peacefully and thinking back over her experience, the patient was able to fully understand the violent forces which had been pressing on her vegetative system, craving release.

The technique of dynamic relaxation consists of a special form of massage which aims, the whole time, toward furthering abdominal respiratory release, and, in this way, at providing relaxation so deep that underlying repressed emotional patterns are awakened - especially those containing autonomic responses. In this way we can influence both the repressed emotions and associated material; repressed emotions together with meaning.

This shows us one of the techniques applied by the Norwegian therapist and teacher Gerda Boyesen¹¹ to working on the body system and getting a release of "sense" coming from organic expressions and not from "free associations" as psychoanalysis used to do.

Examples like the one above will be shown in this text to illustrate its originality: "Sense" being aroused from the body's expressions, feelings and sensations from infancy to adulthood through the therapeutic relationship by different researchers in the clinical setting. This paper arose with the possibility of exploring a semiotic reflection using the role of corporeity and affection in the formation of feeling as a base.

¹¹ Born in Bergen, Norway, 1922. From 1947 to 1952 studied psychology at the University of Oslo doing analysis and vegetotherapy with Dr. Ola Raknes. Graduated in physiotherapy, joined the Bulow Hansen Institute and later, as a clinical psychologist, worked at different psychiatric clinics in Norway. In 1970, established herself in London and divided her time on therapy work between France and England. Died in London in 2005.

2. History

Wilhelm Reich, who was one of the heirs of psychoanalysis, and “father” of somatic psychotherapy, created a technique seeking the unitary current between the psychic and the somatic. For the therapist of Austrian origin, the individual and the social, like the public and the private, were never separate.

While Freud encouraged free association for the liberation of what is inside, Reich encouraged breathing as the vehicle for releasing the inhibitions of the unconscious motor, emotional and perceptive, meeting with ‘The Ego and the Id (1923), in which Freud says that that which is repressed is buried in the id and is simply a part of it.

This means that the repression not only lives in the unconscious, but also in the repressions contained in the organism as a whole.

Based upon these discoveries, he widened his active technique of accessing the unconscious by means of observation, action and interpretation of non-verbal expressions, with the use of touch to unblock muscles, freeing emotions, images, fantasies and movements contained in the somatic expression of the character.

Consequently, during the therapeutic process, the psyche and its fixations are accessed in different ways and not only by means of free verbal association.

In his book, ‘Character Analysis’, based upon the theory of repression, Reich also started to give importance to “how”¹² the patient speaks, to the

¹² One of the Reichian followers, the North American Stanley Keleman, tells us that the “how” or the “exercise of the how” leads us to experiment with how a certain activity is practiced – how to proceed from forming an image to completing it. The exercise of how to help you understand yourself, helps the development of a conscious perception of your standards of feeling and motor-emotional rhythms which your brain needs to understand, so as to, in addition to creating a new way of being, create a new sense for life.

way the body speaks, freeing character defences to be analysed. As such, as well as being made aware, the person makes contact with his organic vitality. The Reichian technique thus works with the muscle armours and with the psychic armour, looking for a unitary flow between the psychic and somatic functions.

Reich was therefore the contemporary precursor of non-verbal or pre-verbal communication¹³ in the psychotherapeutic space. From there on, a person's expressions started to "gain a feeling" which can be interpreted in the game of transferences and resonances of the psychotherapeutic relationship.

Out of the non-verbal communication work of the Reichian practice and those of his followers, one can also think of semioseis¹⁴, that is, the formation of signs arising from this specific therapeutic relationship which includes the body, its expressions, emotions and feelings.

One of his most prominent disciples, Alexander Lowen, in his book *"The Physical Dynamics of Character Structure"* tells us that: *The child who learns to walk at a time when the muscles are not strong enough nor coordinated enough for such activity develops severe tensions in the quadriceps femoris and tensor fasciae latae muscle to give it support. This will happen if an infant is left alone, as it will make some move to get up and go towards its mother. The tensions of these muscle groups will give the leg the rigidity needed for support, but at the expense of natural balance and grace. Where one attempts to induce relaxation of these muscles, one meets with a resistance that is proportionate to the falling anxiety present."*

¹³ Pre verbal means before we learn the words to talk, and non-verbal means any communication without words any time.

¹⁴ Semiosis (from the Greek: σημείωσις, *sēmeiōsis*, a derivation of the verb σημειῶ, *sēmeiō*, "to mark") is any form of activity, conduct, or process that involves signs, including the production of meaning. Briefly – semiosis is sign process. The term was introduced by Charles Sanders Peirce(1839–1914) to describe a process that interprets signs as referring to their objects, as described in his theory of sign relations, or semiotics. From en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiosis

When Lowen tell us this, he is also telling us that the tensions in the muscles have a meaning to be understood. If it comes to a psychotherapeutic relationship, the muscles are a relation to the therapist and also to those who provoked the birth of those tensions.

Nowadays, Edward Tronick¹⁵, researcher and psychologist on the relationship between babies and mothers uses the “still face” experiment where the non-verbal reactions of the babies are clearly connected to the mother’s expressions, creating responses in the babies that can be easily recognized in slow motion videos, so that it is possible to understand existing “hidden” meanings in both the mother and the baby that will help to overcome possible problems in the relationship.

“In face-to-face interactions, young infants begin to learn and define the rules of social interaction. In these early affective interchanges with caregivers, they learn:

- a. The meaning of their own expressive behaviour.*
- b. The characteristics of people who are important to them.*
- c. Cognitive and affective information that allows them to fit into their culture, to identify with their caregivers and to identify themselves. Obviously, the communication system is an important source of nurturance for their cognitive and affective development.”¹⁶*

The ongoing co-creation of the unique features of relationships leads to relationships becoming increasingly differentiated from each other. For example, what the infant does with the mother or how many different things they do together, and the meaning of what they do together are increasingly specific and differentiated from what is done with the father. The same principle is also valid for patient/therapist relationships co-creating dyadic states of consciousness.

¹⁵ Edward Z. Tronick, Ph.D., is Head of the Child Development Unit, Children’s Hospital, Boston, Associate Prof. of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School.

¹⁶ Tronick, Edward, *The Neurobehavioural and Social-Emotional Development of Infants and Children*, W.W.Norton and Company, New York, 2007

3. Approaching Semiotics

The idea and the creation of a semiotic understanding of body psychotherapy is to shine a light on a deeper understanding of this field in aspects related to: mother/baby relationships, somatic posture, somatic expressions and movement, senses, feelings, or what in body psychotherapy we call the “postures of the soul”¹⁷. This research, as we will see, comes from new infant research headed by the psychoanalyst Daniel Stern and his group.

The problematic in the relationship between mothers and babies related to connection and differentiation, the continuity and the discontinuity started to become clearer through a very detailed video analysis in slow motion that allowed us to analyse micro expressions between them that were highly representative of situations that could only be detected in this way.

Semiotics and its concepts might bring to light and widen the knowledge of body psychotherapy, in a way that might make it possible to apply semiotics to the field of body psychotherapy to make signs and symbols and their use or interpretation clearer and more understandable.

“The first imitative smile of a new born might very well be a reflex action due to a given mirror neuron, but when it receives a warm answer by the mother who in turn smiles back at her infant producing a reinforcing effect, a complex semiotic cycle starts to take place. The infant will tend to repeat the same behaviour that turned out to be so “successful” for him or her in terms of environmental response. Successful behaviour will tend to be repeated becoming a regular form of (inter)action. Now, the sequence I just described is precisely what Pierce called the creation of a habit. According to Pierce, the habit is a tendency to an action that stabilizes the semiotic process, it is a

¹⁷ Our intentionality is expressed in our motoric readiness for specific actions. This readiness is physiologically rooted in the gamma nervous system signals to the muscle spindles, which are the organs within the muscle which prepare it for specific actions. The muscle spindles can be understood as being the soul of the muscle. The shape of our lives is anchored in the patterns of intentionality, and the associated postural states that we move through. My comment.

form of emergent regularity on which the whole semiotic process is centered."¹⁸

Patrizia Violi in an article¹⁹ raises the question: how can semiosis and consciousness of the semiotic field develop? The final answer that Violi gives to this question fits with what I believe and with what interests me concerning mother/babies relationships and my adult clinical experience either with individuals or groups.

Violi suggests that the field of reciprocal mother/infant interaction that Stern and infant research which has been described, as we know already, is the intersubjective space where the Self of the child constitutes itself, and it is also where semiosis occurs in the first place. Violi affirms that these two processes are two aspects of one and in the same process.

She also says that we can think that the mother's response to the baby's behaviour is the *interpretant* of that behaviour. I will add to that and we will see later on that the same process happens when for the first time the mother gives the nipple of the breast to the baby for the first time possible without any words being spoken. One gives sense(meaning) to the other.

The kinds of signs expressed by the mother to the baby involving emotions, sensations, thoughts are numerous, and they represent several interpretants. Violi writes that all this represents the semiotic field of interaction, and it is precisely within this field that semiosis emerges.

The semiotic field of body psychotherapy might transverse as much through the natural processes of being a human being, an organism, and all of its relational behaviours, as through being a member of a society and all its complex cultural processes.

¹⁸ *Violi Patrizia*, Distributed intersubjective semiosis: ontogenesis, consciousness and semiosis. University of Bologna, 2007.

¹⁹ Idem.

The fields of communication passes equally through the pre-verbal, verbal and non-verbal periods. Maybe it is possible to say that: “semiotics of the organism” are associated with “zoosemiotics”²⁰: in considering the human organism, as the animal part of the human being in its most basic functioning, this forms the lower limit of semiotics. According to research²¹ conducted particularly into the pre-verbal period of human development, the period of signification, or pre-significant construction, starts between this primitive human being and its mother, or whomsoever is accompanying it.

The human being, who is also located in the animal world, benefits from both fields, dependently and independently, one on the other. Independently, for example, when the human being manages to express a simple reflex, without thought or conscience, such as may occur in situations of danger or moments of extreme pleasure. These reflexes cover the spectrum of human experience.

In one text Eco quotes the study of “olfactory systems” about which poets such as Baudelaire theorise upon the existence of smells as registers of dangers or proxemic indicators. We can also cite smells as having a trace of memory trace, that is, a smell may emotionally transport you back to moments in your past with great clarity. These sensory inputs all add to the semiotic experience.

²⁰ Thomas A. Sebeok (1920–2001), a student of Charles W. Morris, was a prolific and wide-reaching American semiotician. Though he insisted that animals are not capable of language, he expanded the purview of semiotics to include non-human signaling and communication systems, thus raising some of the issues addressed by philosophy of the mind and coining the term zoosemiotics. Sebeok insisted that all communication was made possible by the relationship between an organism and the environment it lives in. He also posed the equation between semiosis (the activity of interpreting signs) and life. *From <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotic>*

²¹ As we can see in Section One the pictures of a relationship between a newborn and the mother and a nine day old baby and his grandfather.

4. Semiotic and non-semiotic fields

In his text on the Theory of Semiotics, Eco²²(1976) raises a question about the difference between semiotic and non-semiotic fields, describing the area of contemporary research into semiotics as the “semiotic field” and giving the name of “frontiers or thresholds” to this area between the semiotic and the non-semiotic. Eco says that the description of a semiotic field could appear to be simply a list of “communicative” behaviours, which would suggest that semiotics studies all the cultural processes as “processes of communication”. He affirms that the only reason for this definition would be because it establishes a “system of signification”.

So as to avoid misunderstanding, Eco makes this distinction so that the difference between the semiotics of communication and signification is resolved using the possible forms of mediation. This will become extremely important when we come to analyze communication and look at the understanding of corporal psychotherapy within a clinical situation, within the community, and in the mother/baby relationship.

4a. Formation of Meaning

When a baby starts to cry and looks to its mother, and at the same moment the mother looks at him and says: “Are you hungry, my little one?” “Yes, he is hungry”, she confirms! At this moment, the mother interprets and gives a meaning to the baby’s emotional expression, just as when the baby feeds from the breast for the first time, the mother’s breast gives meaning to the baby’s mouth which feeds, the milk which is fed upon and that which he feels when he is fed. Our experiences, and the objects within them, first define the meaning that we give them, and then are defined by that meaning.

²² Eco, Umberto, *Tratado Geral da Semiótica*, Ed. Perspectiva, São Paulo, Brazil, 2005

Information becomes available only through active engagement. Alan Fogel²³ proposes that the creation of meaning is the motivation for communication and for the persistence of relationships over time, not the mere meeting of needs through other people. In Fogel's book²⁴ he quotes an example written by the psychoanalyst Ernest Schachtel about normal development in the following way:

A painter may spend many days, weeks or months, or even years, in looking at the same mountain, as Cezanne did, or at blades of grass or bamboo leaves or branches of a tree, as many of the Chinese and Japanese masters did, without tiring of it and without ceasing to discover something new in it. The same is true of the poet's or writer's devoted love for his object... of the true naturalist's perception of the plant or animal with which he has to live for long periods of time in order to acquire that intimate knowledge from which eventually new meaning and understanding will be born.(pag. 89)

4b. Process of Communication – from sign to sense

A process of communication is the passing of a signal that leaves its source and goes to a receiver or recipient. A signal is not necessarily a "sign", and therefore this signal, as if it is in a process between 'machines' that do not have any 'meaning', is just an exchange of information. When a human 'receiver' exists, we may be looking at a process of signification, because the signal emitted by the object is not only a stimulus, but causes the emergence of an interpretation in the person.

For example, a young child who looks at his feeding bottle may remember the mother's presence, or may feel hungry. This is the child interpreting the feeding bottle in this way.

²³ Fogel, Alan is Prof. of Psychology at the University of Utah.

²⁴ Fogel, Alan, *Developing through Relationships*, The University Chicago Press, Chicago, USA, 1993.

Eco gives the example of smoke and fire: while the smoke appears to be one with the fire which causes it, it is not a sign of the fire, “but the smoke may be a sign-vehicle when the fire is not visible, since there is a social rule which associates it with fire.”²⁵ Therefore, the smoke seen either in the presence or the absence of fire suggests a relation to Eco’s definition of the sign as something which significantly substitutes with something else.

We can therefore think that the ‘feeding bottle’ significantly substitutes for the presence of the mother in her absence, just as one day, an inner photographic representation might open a feeling of presence inside the person.

At the level of non-verbal communication, Eco provides an example of spontaneous, non-encoded, emotional expressions produced without any communicative intention, to illustrate non-verbal phenomena below the semiotic thresholds.

These phenomena become encoded and consequently semiotic as soon as they show a cultural variation or are simulated or imitated within a certain context: for example, the mother who codifies the baby’s expression; the baby who codifies the feeding bottle. The first time it takes place, the mother’s expression makes an “inference”, but when it is recognized that the relationship becomes conventional, the semiotic convention becomes established. This often happens in families during education when the inference of the parents will help character formation.

In this thesis, we will see how these inferences become important and then semiotic to the extent that as well as “signifying”, they are also providing and constructing a real form in the relationship, and the person, the patient, in his somatic posture transformed into an icon.

²⁵ In Nöth, Winfried, *O Limiar Semiótico de Umberto Eco*, ‘Comunicação e Semiótica’ website; PUC-SP.

The semiotic threshold is being crossed as soon as the systems of convention interfere in the phenomena. We can say that these may, or may not, be pre-semiotic. For example, during development, the flow of communication between mother and baby is expected to be in a dynamic harmonized way, without chronic invasion or deprivation. When this happens blocks in communication may be created, as demonstrated by the videos and the book by Tronick²⁶ with the frozen face of the mother interrupting the flow, and as a consequence jeopardizing the possibility of meaning.

The stimulus will be the first attempt at contact with the 'receiver'; we know that a human baby needs exterior stimulation that will develop his curiosity and his psyche in order to exist and grow healthily. We depend on the other for existence, the baby depends on the mother's eye to have a place there, on the mother's heart to have a place there, on the mother's arms, hands and body to have a place there, and by having those places he will construct the presence of the mother in his own body, vegetative system, subjectivity and inter-subjectivity.²⁷

In this thesis, using an example from Gilberto Safra²⁸ I show the consequences in babies who are stimulated naturally; in babies who are stimulated, but only a little; and in babies who are not stimulated at all. The stimulation in these cases may come from the mother and from the other people surrounding the baby, just as it may come from all the bits and pieces around its cot, which are representatives of the outside world. The stimulation coming from human beings has a different emotional quality to that of the bits and pieces, which are usually merely representational objects. We will see that society will develop different kinds of behaviours and presences out of this experience.

²⁶ Tronick, Edward, *The Neurobehavioural and Social-Development of Infants and Children*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, USA, 2007 and Peggy Cooper Davis & Elizabeth Cooper Davis, eds., *Essays for Pleasure: Artists and Scholars Respond to Carol Gilligan's Map of Love*, forthcoming.

²⁷ Safra, Gilberto, *A Face Estética do Self*, Unimarco Ed., São Paulo, Brazil, 1999

²⁸ idem

4c. Psychosemiotic and Body Psychotherapy

Ivan Darrault²⁹ wrote a text where he developed certain types of problems inside a problematic "psycho-semiotic", and little by little he redefined the domain as "etho-semiotic". He calls the research of the proto-subject the experience of the olfact. The visual ability of the infant is very limited (he cannot clearly perceive objects that are 20cm away from his eyes), so Darrault raises the hypothesis that the olfactive canal participates actively in the ontogenesis of the bond. It has now been demonstrated that the sensorial olfactive system is very functional to the newborn baby: he can distinguish the smells in a very refined way and can also manifest innate preferences.

The tactile communication that we find in the biodynamic psychotherapeutic studies and clinic created by the Norwegian psychologist, Gerda Boyesen³⁰, will be looked at in more detail later. Boyesen developed her psychotherapeutic work based upon a form of massage that stimulates the basic workings of the body at the organic, muscular and emotional levels: stimulating the autonomic nervous system to re-balance itself.

In this technique, during the treatment, the therapist listens through a stethoscope located over the patient's abdomen. The peristaltic reactions to the physical touch reveal a reaction related not only to the digestion of food, but also to the digestion of emotions, which later on Boyesen called "psychoperistalsis".

There is semiotic inter-change, as profoundly organic as muscular and mental, expressed through sensory signals coming from the patient's responses to touch, which the therapist might transform into interpretative signs of the person's past.

²⁹ Darrault, Ivan, *La Sémiotique du Comportement: L'Ethosémiotique, La psychosémiotique*, Questions de sémiotique, sous la direction d'Anne Hénault, aux PUF, 2002

³⁰ Boyesen, Gerda, *Entre Psiquê e Soma*, Ed. Summus, São Paulo, Brazil, 1987

It is important to point out at this point that Boyesen's work with touch in adults brings a lot of memories and regressions to the non-verbal stage of communication, because the affect-motoric³¹ schemas were very much present during infancy. Adults and babies have very similar affect-motoric schemas. In adults there is usually an evolution of what happened in infancy. In touch there is an important and efficient reciprocity.

Connection and differentiation schemas are connected to touch. For example babies either look for connection with the mother or others as well as looking for separation and consequently for differentiation. The baby turns his head or eyes looking for contact, and shifts his eyes away breaking the contact and creating differentiation. The same is valid for touch; the baby stretches his legs or arms against the mother's body to move away from her just as he may grab her with his hands, arms and legs in the search for connection.

When we are working at a pre-linguistic level, the sensory systems such as sight, hearing, smell and taste come to bear importance. One of these systems, the 'haptic'³², is where the attention is on touch, where feeling has mechanical and thermal receptors, due to its anatomical organs being in the skin, the joints and the muscles. As forms of stimulation, these 'haptic' organs have the sensitivity of the skin, the configuration of the joints and the stretching of the muscle fibres. They form a complex group of sub-systems, not limited to a specific organ, but to receptors that are in materials throughout the entire body.

This kind of affect-motoric connection and differentiation was researched in George Downing's³³ work with videotapes. This allows us to see in slow motion most of the details of the relationship. Once an adult or a

³¹ Affect-motoric schema happens when the motor system (movement) moves together and fills with affection, sensitivity or emotion. It is not just a mechanical movement.

³² Haptic refers to the sense of touch in Santaella, Lucia, *Corpo e Comunicação*, Ed. Paulus, São Paulo, Brazil, 2004.

³³ Downing, George, *Body and Word*, Koselverlag, Munich, Germany, 1997

psychotherapist develops this kind of “eye” to see the details he can easily apply it to adult therapeutic relationships.

At this point we can think about calling this specific semiotic field “Body Psychotherapeutic Semiotics” which studies these sorts of signals from three points of view; the first, which observes the interior world in an organic manner along with its transformations, the second that observes the appearance and posture and the third, which studies the communicative and encoded relationship between psychotherapist and the patient.

Eco places psychoanalysis as a branch of ‘medical semiotics’, but it is convenient to qualify psychotherapy here as a practice that is currently largely outside of the medical arena, but it can be employed by such.

In body psychotherapy, it is no longer enough to speak only of the patient, nor just of his dreams, but also of his bodily posture, the state of his muscles, his ‘psychic’ organisation and posture, and how the subjectivity of his verbal and dreaming report is related to the organic world. Later we will see how the posture of the body, the muscles and the skin are transformed into semiotic signals.

4d. Resonance, significance and culture

The ‘resonance’³⁴ that exists between therapist and patient and that is established in a psychotherapeutic relationship defines a special signification. Gilberto Safra³⁵ gives the example of a patient who, even over a great number of sessions, because of his anxiety, made himself virtually unintelligible. Repeatedly, he was unable to get to the point of his story.

³⁴ Boadella, David, *Energy and Character*, Abbotsbury Publications, England 1970/2003 volumes: 2/1, 14/1, 25/1, 28/1, 29/1, 30/1; *Transferencia, Ressonância e Interferência*, Energia e Carater, vol.2, Ed. Summus, São Paulo, Brazil, 1987

³⁵ Safra, Gilberto, *A Face Estética do Self*, Unimarco Ed., São Paulo, 1999

During these sessions, Safra listened to his patient, and, through this constant listening, realized that the intonation of the sentences carried a rhythm that was very similar to music. In one of these sessions Safra hummed the rhythm of the patients' sentences to him. After a few of these repetitions, the patient began associating it with a time in his life in which this song was important, thereby aiding the understanding and significance of his process. The musical resonance brought out the patient's meaning, the music acted as a signal, and the response (the interpreter, the signifier) gave significance.

With this, we have two significant levels: one pre-signed and the other signed. A lower level, which concerns the transmission of signals, and a more elaborate or complex level, which implies the presence of signs.

From this starting point, Eco suggests a more complex level where we can find cultures, social behaviours, myths, rites, beliefs, and a vast range of other signifiers, as we can see in the photographs of a wide range of mothers and babies from different regions; this evidence of semiotics helps our psychological understanding.

As was said before with the help of video cameras³⁶ today we can follow this relationship with great clarity and exactitude, even in slow motion, identifying gestures in an almost precise form, such as in the studies of Edward Tronick³⁷, a psychologist at the Children's' Hospital, Boston, that analyze in great detail the relationship between mother and baby, and the significance of the gestures, emotions and expressions between the two.

Their behaviour appears to show that, whoever is the active party in the behaviour is forming the ability to become aware and signify through it, and that (surprisingly) it is the baby that is often the initiator of significant relating gestures, with the mother being the recipient.³⁸

³⁶ Stern, Daniel, *The First Relationship*, Harvard University Press, 1977, USA, pg. 1

³⁷ Tronick, Ed, *The Neurobehavioural and Social-Development of Infants and Children*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, USA, 2007

³⁸ Stern, Daniel, *O Mundo Interpessoal do Bebê*, Ed. Artes Médicas, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 1992.

Eco says that, when at the upper threshold of natural limits, if we accept the term “culture” in its anthropological sense, we find three cultural phenomena that do not appear to have any communicative function or significance:

1. The production and use of objects that transform the man-nature relationship;
2. The family relationships as the primary nucleus of institutionalized social relations;
3. The exchange of economic goods.

These three phenomena were chosen as objects of semi-anthropological study, which tended to show that ‘culture’, as a whole, is a phenomenon of signification and communication, and that humanity and society only exist when they establish relations of signification and processes of communication.

Eco’s conclusion³⁹ laid the hypothesis that any culture as a whole should be studied as a semiotic phenomenon, transforming semiotics, in the last analysis, into a general theory of culture, or as a substitute for cultural anthropology. Thus culture may be understood better if it is approached in a semiotic manner, or human relations could function better by obeying the rules in the exchange of signals.

5. Signals and the still face

Of interest here is Tronik’s experiment (2007) in which he filmed mothers and babies in the following way: He instructed the mothers to suddenly freeze their facial expressions. This can be seen as the mother transforming herself into an object thereby becoming a signifier. The mother who presented an interactive signifier. The mother who presented an interactive signifier, interrupting the communication, through the signals,

³⁹ Eco, Umberto, *Tratado Geral da Semiótica*, Ed. Perspectiva, São Paulo, Brazil, 2005.

leaves the child in panic, until he casts his interest aside and reverts into himself. Social interaction is a rule-governed, goal-oriented system in which both partners share from the very beginning.

The still face violates the rules of the system by simultaneously conveying contradictory information about one partner's goal or intent. The mother is communicating "hello" and "good-bye" at the same time. The infant is trapped in contradiction, initiates and greets but then turns away. If the infant fails to get the interaction back on track and establish reciprocity, complete withdrawal is the eventual result.

Our aim here is to study semiotics in human relations, at the point at which the symbolic values contained in the expressions, be they in the face, body, sound or touch, construct conventions and codes which are understandable beyond the verbal system and which are approached more as bio-semiotic or psycho-semiotic concepts, or what we have been calling in Brazil: 'Psychoanalytic Semiotics'⁴⁰.

Besides having a physical body made of flesh, blood, bones, muscles and organs, all of which suffer the ravages of time, and as an animal which is satisfied by food and sex, the body in psychotherapy also has a "drive"⁴¹, or as we say in psychoanalysis, an imaginary body and a symbolic body.

Since Freud, it has been known that the "I" is linked, or should be linked, to the image of the body. Through Freudian discoveries, Lacan⁴² would give the body a new systematization of the psychic reality: Imaginary, Real and Symbolic.

⁴⁰ Santaella, Lucia. *Corpo e Comunicação "sintomas da cultura"*. São Paulo: Paulus, 2004 and Cesarotto, Oscar. *Escritos Inéditos de Freud, 1977*. Buenos Aires: E. K. Editor.

⁴¹ Freud, Sigmund, *Obras Completas*, Editorial Biblioteca Nueva, Madrid, Spain, 1996.

⁴² Lacan Jacques, *Le séminaire, Livre IV: La relation d'objet et les structures freudiennes, 1956-1957*, French: (texte établi par Jacques-Alain Miller), Paris: Seuil, 1994.

Reich⁴³ went deeper into an understanding of the body as a political and sexual entity that determines the character. Some post-Reichians, such as Lowen, Boadella and Keleman, found forms of the body that would represent the character, and the body's signals started to be studied and recognised, with the establishment of an era in the development of psychotherapy as a visual science of appearance, posture, of the muscles, the organs, of the feelings and of movement. After those authors came Winnicott who created a solid theory and practice for object relations that will see later in this thesis.

6. Object Relation approach

It was through object relations theory that the work with babies and psychotherapy presented important changes. New York researchers Greenberg and Mitchell (1983), consider the existence of two modes of theoretical construction to deal with the object relations issue. One of these modes has been called the 'drive/structure model' and the other the 'relational/structure model'. These authors stated that: There were two major strategies for dealing with the problem, accommodating the theory of drive to clinical emphases on object relations. Within Freud's drive theory all facets of personality and psychopathology are understood essentially as a function, a derivative, of drives and their transformations. Thus, to solve the problem of object relations while preserving drive theory intact requires the derivation of relations with others (and of the individual's inner representations of those relations) as vicissitudes of the drives themselves. The second, more radical, strategy for dealing with object relations has been to replace the drive theory model with a fundamentally different conceptual framework in which relations with others constitute the fundamental blocks of mental and body life. The creation and re-creation of specific modes of relatedness with others replaces drive discharge as the force motivating human behaviour. The clearest expression of this strategy came during the 1940s in the work of Harry Sullivan and W.D. Fairbairn.⁴⁴

⁴³ Reich, Wilhelm, *Mass Psychology of Fascism*, Condor Book, Great Britain, 1976.

⁴⁴ Safra, G. e Cotta, J. in *Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*, Great Britain, vol. 4 2009

Section 1

Genesis of meaning and body psychotherapy

“The world presents itself twofold to man,
because man’s attitude is twofold.
Man’s attitude is twofold, because his basic words (fundamental words) are twofold.
His basic words are not single words but pairs;
One pair of basic words is I-Thou.
The other pair: I-It, and It can be substituted by
I-He and I-She without any basic change.
Therefore, also man’s ego is twofold,
because the I of the I-Thou is different from the
I of the pair I-It.

Basic words do not confirm an existing matter, but when spoken, create the matter (Stift den Bestand). Basic words are spoken with the inner essence of man.”⁴⁵

1. Introductory observations

The observations upon which this research is based began in the late seventies, when I started my first studies and training in body psychotherapy, at the Gerda Boyesen Institute in London. At that time, the introduction of the body into psychotherapy provided us all with a great opportunity to research and learn about non-verbal communication through body posture, sensations, feelings, movement, gesture and expressions, from the very surface as well as deep down to the essence of the human being, and vice versa. The work was usually developed in experiential and theoretical groups of people interested in becoming body psychotherapists.

At that time, the research used to take place on three levels of the relationship: the first, and most superficial⁴⁶ level was the body’s carriage and its historical meanings related to behavior and posture. A simple but well known example is the person with her upper back falling forward, projecting the neck and the head down. Which kind of “embodiment” would this be? What would be the historical meaning in this body’s aesthetics⁴⁷? Why did this body develop into this specific form?

⁴⁵ Buber, Martin in Buber, Martin in F.S. Rothschild, *Creation and Evolution*, J.Ph.Hes,C.Sorek, P.O.B. 200 Mevasseret Zion 90805, Israel, 1994

⁴⁶ *Superficial* is used here in the sense of “on the surface”, the most apparent.

⁴⁷ The term aesthetic was used for the first time by Baumgarten (1714-1762). Traditionally it is an expression used to refer to art and beauty. However, the word *aesthetic* is linked to the science of the “senses”, to sensation. It comes from the Greek *aisthanesthai*, which means “to perceive”; *aisthesis* means “perception”; *aisthetikos* means “the one that is capable of perception”. I use the term in this text to approach the phenomenon of how a person creates a form that can be postural, image-based and sensorial and which propagates sensations of warmth, humour, fear, etc. Those forms when updated in the presence of an

The second level, which we call the middle layer level, is the kind of musculature developed by a person: Does she have a dynamic movement? Are they rigid hypertonic or are they collapsed hypotonic? How are the muscles interconnected in the somatic posture? Muscles are related to our capacity for action and movement; depending upon our posture, we will move and act in many different ways, which will have their own meanings.

The third level is the vegetative system and the viscera. Why are they important? Mainly because they express through vegetative reactions feelings such as fear, pleasure, anger, love through shaking, sweating, trembling, peristaltic sounds, breathing, vocal sounds, etc, - all connected to meaning. For example, when a mother understands the baby in primary infancy, she does not need words to talk to or listen to the baby.

To get some more ideas about what is outlined above we shall study a series of frames from a video that shows the relationship of a grandfather and his grandson at nine days of age. At the starting point of our research we already have an idea about the formation of meaning, semiosis and semiotic interaction, approached theoretically and experientially in a stage of pre- and non-verbal communication⁴⁸. In this case, the field of work is not a place to check a theory, but perhaps a way of learning practical semiotics.

other, allows the person to constitute aspects and foundings of the self which exist in the world. (From, *A Face Estética do Self*, *Gilberto Safra*, pag. 20, footnote, Ed. Unimarco, 1999.

⁴⁸ The difference between pre- and non-verbal communication is very important here. The so called pre-verbal stage is when the developing child is not yet able to form words. The non-verbal communication, which the child lives since he/she is born until the first words are formed, is essential for the development of the future understanding of non-verbal communication between adults. This means that pre-verbal refers to the first stage of development, while non-verbal is part of us throughout our whole life.

1a. Genesis of meaning

As Patrizia Violi said whilst teaching, the possible location of an empirical confrontation would be the observation of the genesis of meaning in the ontogenesis of the individual, revealing a genetic knowledge based on an empirical situation.

As an introduction to the observation of this confrontation, I suggest what the psychoanalyst and researcher Daniel Stern presents in his book *The First Relationship*⁴⁹.

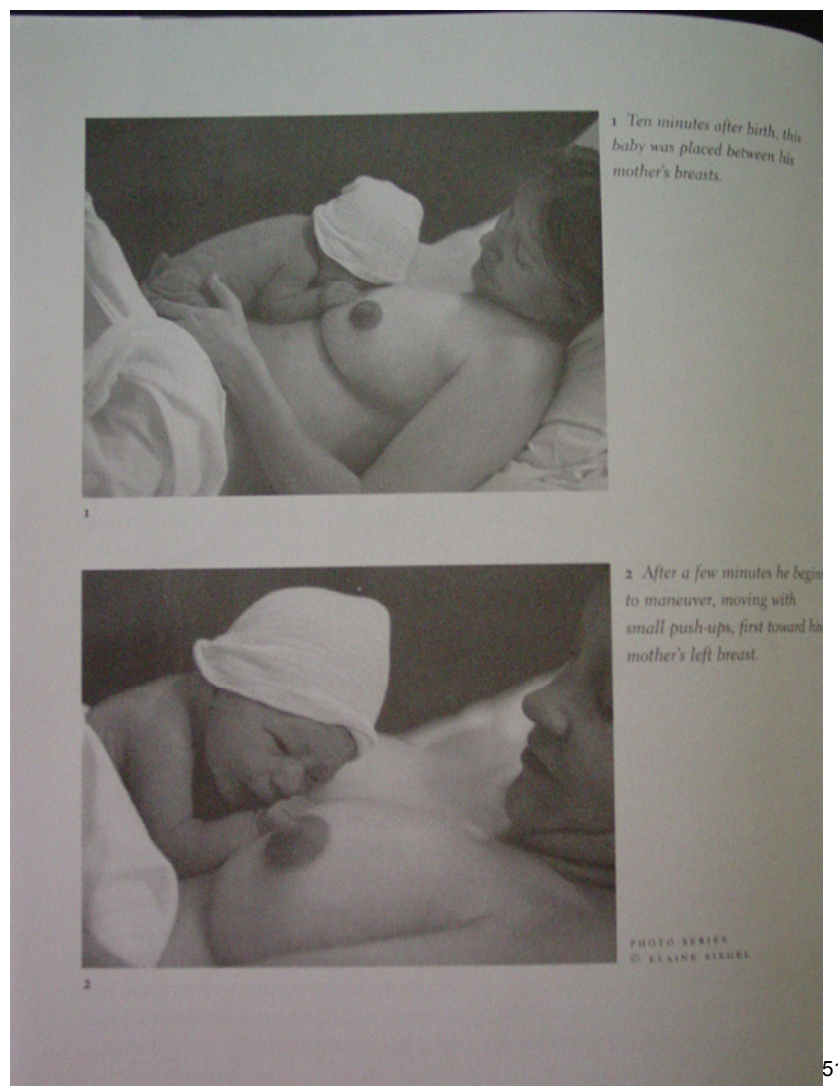
Three ideas were (and are) fundamental. First, we need to view the infant and the mother in natural interactions. Only there could the largest range of capacities be seen, in both the baby and the mother. Infants are natural social beings, so it is in a social environment that their abilities are revealed. Similarly, real maternal behaviors could only be seen in the presence of a real (and ideally, a beloved) baby who would elicit those behaviors. Experimental situations would not do, not alone. They capture too small a slice of life and lack the context needed for full understanding.

Second, we needed new methods for these observations; methods scaled down and adjusted to the split-second and non-verbal world of mother-infant interaction.

Third, a guiding concept was essential for a meaningful viewing of mother-infant interaction, from both a clinical and a common-sense perspective. “Mutual regulation” was the guiding concept. It captured the notion that both mother’s and infant’s behaviors could largely be explained as mutual attempts to regulate the baby’s momentary state – which might be hunger, arousal, joy, excitement, and so on, depending on the time of the day and the specific context.

49 Stern, Daniel, *The First Relationship*, Harvard University Press, 1977, USA, pg. 1

The following frames of a film show a baby at the mother's breast, ten minutes after birth. The mother is simply there, present, calm, waiting for the baby's contact with her body. The relationship here is based mainly on the surface skin contact, the body of the mother giving grounding to the baby's body, the smell of the oxytocin⁵⁰ (also known as the hormone of calm, love and healing), movement, gravity, gesture and contact.



51

⁵⁰ From Greek: "quick birth", is a mammalian hormone that also acts as a neurotransmitter in the brain. In females, it is released in large amounts after distension of the cervix and vagina during labour, and after stimulation of the nipples, facilitating birth and breastfeeding, respectively. In humans, oxytocin is released during orgasm in both sexes. In the brain, oxytocin is involved in social recognition and bonding, and might be involved in the formation of trust between people. Also, oxytocin has been known to affect the brain by regulating circadian homeostasis, such as a person's body temperature, activity level, and wakefulness. (More about this subject in: Kerstin Uvnäs Moberg, *The Oxytocin Factor*, Perseus Books, Cambridge, MA, USA, 2003).

⁵¹ Marshall Klaus, *Your Amazing Newborn*, Perseus Books, Cambridge, MA, USA 1999

3, 4 He frequently stops to rest and suck on his fist and fingers.



3



4



5

5, 6 With push-ups, he toward the right breast a minutes.



6

7 Mother and infant gaze at each other.



7

Familiar with the taste and smell of amniotic fluid, he continues to suck on his unwashed hand and soon he moves to a similar smell emanating from an unwashed breast.



8



9

9, 10 The baby begins to suck on the nipple, pressing the mother's nipple into his mouth and raising the mother's nipple level.



10



According to the experiences of Winnicott, and also those of Daniel Stern,⁵² we can say that the baby created the breast at the same moment

⁵² Stern, Daniel, *O Mundo Interpessoal do Bebê*, Ed. Artes Médicas, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 1992.

when the mother arrived with the breast, providing meaning to the creation of the baby. In this way this is the construction of the baby's sense of Self⁵³ or, in other words, the construction of a process of inter-subjectivity, which in semiotic terms we speculate that is the construction of the actor's process of subjectivity.

In these frames we can clearly see how the rudimentary forms of gaze and touch are already affect-motoric schemas (as named by George Downing⁵⁴) operating just after birth. Connectedness and differentiation start just after birth. Both evolve together over the succeeding months, with new schemas progressively. They are not two stages of the journey, but run in parallel.

We can see the baby pushing the mother to move (body differentiation) and we can see pulling at the mother to connect, all of this totally non-verbal. There is an expected non-verbal exchange from both sides. This tiny human being is already equipped, physically and motorically, for interactional reciprocity.

The muscle groups which direct eye movements, head turning and arm pushing and pulling are functioning quite well just after birth, so that the baby takes on his share in the interactional exchange - or tries to. Without video microanalysis as shown in the frames above, this could never have been proved.

1b. Winnicott's proposal

During his experience at the clinic, Winnicott saw the need to propose a third area of human experience, which is neither the inner or outer reality, but an area which includes the participation of both. According to him,

⁵³ *Self* here is understood as a dynamic organization that makes it possible for an individual to become a person, to be himself. It is an organization that happens inside and during the maturational process with the facilitation of the human environment. At each level of this process there is an ever increasing range of new experiences being integrated. In Safra Gilberto, *A Face Estética do Self*, Ed. Unimarco, 1999 São Paulo, page 37.

⁵⁴ Downing, George, *Body and Word*, Koselverlag, Munich, Germany, 1997

it is in this area that the first transitional phenomena will take place, and the creation of the first possession⁵⁵. He has given as an example, an everyday object such as a nappy or a bedcover, which will stimulate the sensations of the presence or absence of the other, from dependence to independence, from the subjective to the shared (inter-subjective).

In our case, we can observe that this intermediary field is determined by variations in facial expressions, in mood, breathing, attention, rhythm, sound, motor functions, etc. which flow between each other like waves, forming symbols of culture. The child involved in this interaction also comes to give the symbol a personal use, playing with them through his creative capacity. It is in this symbolic game that we find in communication the possibility of being in the world in a state subjective to a shared reality.

In the occidental world, the word and language have either been identified with reason or with the origin of reason, but what we observe in the situation in the clinic, and especially in the interactions between mother and baby, is that the word and discursive language do not cover the symbolic field; in fact numerous articulations present themselves: in gesture, the production of sounds, visual forms and others described above, with all these 'means' being available for the construction of the self, its way of being and its bodily posture.

The relation between mother and baby is characterized by a field of experience rather than by a field of perception, in which gesture and sensations present the 'selves' to each other. This experience is organized aesthetically giving rise to the symbols of the self, which are articulated in images and movements creating the personal way of being.

For the psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott, a person's tendencies are once again found in the origin of the self, genetically determined by life and by

⁵⁵ Safra, Gilberto, *A Face Estética do Self*, Unimarco Editora, 1999, São Paulo, Brasil

objects which appear when the moment arrives to perceive them. In this way, the baby goes about creating the world and developing his creativity.

This contribution from Winnicott⁵⁶ ties together his studies of infants and psychic development. He saw each individual's need to reconcile inner and outer realities as being at the heart of the development of the mind. His use of the term *transitional* has a rich sense of references. In his opening footnote he acknowledges Fairbairn's use of the term, by which Fairbairn signified the transition from infantile dependence to adult dependence.

For Winnicott however, the term implies the potential space and phenomena that lie between self and object, mother and baby, the baby's inner and outer worlds, and the worlds of things and fantasy.

Winnicott's exploration of transitional phenomena was to continue over twenty years, but in his first paper he had already stated that these phenomena are the progenitors of cultural and artistic phenomena. It is in the space between inner and outer worlds, which is also the space between people – the transitional space – that intimate relationships and creativity occur.

The concepts of Winnicott on *transitional object* and *transitional phenomena* are important, especially in work on the mother/baby relationship. They created a new space in between the inner and outer, an area of experience, to which inner reality and outer reality both contribute. It is an area which is not challenged, because no claim is made on its behalf except that it shall exist as a resting-place for the individual engaged in the human

⁵⁶ The notion of "object relations" originated with Freud's discussion of the fate of the sexual instinct, libido, seeking an object or person by which to be gratified. However, a psychology of object relations that put the individual's need to relate to others at the center of human development first achieved prominence in the work of Ronald Fairbairn and Melanie Klein, who thought that the efforts of each infant to relate to the mother constituted the first and most important tendency in the baby. Winnicott's work, which began slightly later, soon became a central part of this legacy. These three were not alone in their efforts to establish elements of what has collectively come to be known as "object relations theory", but their work has continued to constitute the basic frame work for the elaborations of others. More about that in: Scharff, David, *Object Relations Theory and Practice*, Jason Aronson Inc. London, England, 1996.

task of keeping inner and outer reality separate and yet interrelated. This distinction according to our research starts at birth, creating meanings through differentiation and connection.

It is important here to clarify what is meant by “object”⁵⁷. The psychoanalytical usage of the word “object” refers to a thing in contrast to a person. An ‘object’ is defined as “That towards which action or desire is directed, that to which the subject relates himself”. Primal objects are always persons, parts of persons, or symbols of the same. When the relationship is between the subject and a part of a person, the object is called *part object*.

1c. The good enough mother

The concept of “good enough mother” and its implications to the development and strengthening of the ego were developed from a specific criticism of Freud, i.e., that the Freudian theory presumes the existence of an ego at birth, which can operate since birth.

To Winnicott, the term ego is used to describe that part of the growing human personality that tends, under suitable conditions, to become integrated into a unit. As we can see, there is a difference between the uses of the concept of ego found in Freud from that found in Winnicott.

From the Winnicottian perspective, we can say that the part of the growing personality, the ego, needs the “good enough mothering” to be able to cope with the complexity of human life. This represents a huge difference between one theory and the other.

In the British’s author’s concept, the health conquest of the ‘I AM’ phase, around the first birthday, would provide the individual with the ability to be a whole person, with an internal reality and an external one, capable of relating to others as separated people and outside the ego. However, being

⁵⁷ Smith, David in Boadella, David, *Social Structure and Character Structure*, book of the *Intrnational Institute of Biosynthesis*, unpublished.

capable of becoming ME first of all requires the existence of a “good enough mother” that would have facilitated the accomplishment of the inherent tasks of the personal maturational processes of her baby during the first year.

This perspective developed by Winnicott questions the anthropological concept. This asserts that human beings are already constituted at birth, without having to fulfil the fundamental ontological needs of the care provided by the human environment.⁵⁸

A baby at the breast is relating to the breast as a part object because he is not yet able to grasp the mother as a totality, as a person or as a *whole object*. The baby can feel it, but not grasp it.

One other important property of objects is that they can split. Splitting occurs when the relationship with an object is both pleasurable and unpleasurable (ambivalent). In early infancy the baby tend to believe that all unpleasure comes from a ‘bad mother’ and all pleasure comes from a ‘good mother’.

In adults who are not psychotic the process occurs in a less extreme illusion in which some individuals are endowed with exaggeratedly positive qualities and others with magnified negative qualities. From this perspective Winnicott created the concept of ‘good enough mother’.

We could say that the pre-conditions for formation at this stage are an undifferentiated/differentiated continuum where subject and object are sometimes not distinct but fused together, and sometimes differentiated and separate at a very subtle level.

From a psychotherapeutic point of view, it can be easier to understand how much the continuity and discontinuity influence development. From a

⁵⁸ Safra, Gilberto and Cotta, José Alberto in *Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*, Routledge Taylor, Francis Group, United Kingdom, vol. 4 2009

semiotic point view, we are still researching to discover how valid this is, but in a cautious way we could call this original and potential flow (continuity) as a pro-tense subject and a potential object conceiving the semiotic.

I am saying continuity when there is no cut in the flow of communication that makes differentiation/indifferentiation possible. Discontinuity is when there is a brake in the communication as for example in Tronick's experiment with the still face. In this case there is no development of differentiation but there is trauma and abandonment. In this way I am supposing that semioses happens when there is a flow of communication that creates differentiation/indifferentiation and consequently meaning.

1d. Daniel Stern's example⁵⁹

It will be worth while here to show an example from Daniel Stern of a twenty-nine-year-old psychotic woman who had been hospitalized with her ten month old daughter. The woman appears to be highly attentive to her daughter's needs, and to be sensitive and capable with physical contact, which is a surprise for a psychotic person who usually has difficulties with body contact. Something about the whole thing left the hospital staff concerned to the point of thinking that something was very wrong but they could not specify what. Stern and his colleagues first of all observed the two of them together, and found that the woman was obviously concerned about the daughter, protecting her from harm and recognizing her needs, whilst there was also a conscious attention to a kind of body contact. For example:

The mother gently took her sleeping baby and began to lay her on the bed so she would stay asleep. After she had ever-so-slowly eased the baby's head onto the bed, she took one of the baby's arms, which was awkwardly positioned, and with her two hands, carefully guided it to a feather-like landing on the bed....

⁵⁹ in Downing, George, *Body and Word*, Koselverlag, Munich, Germany, 1997

Stern's video tape was necessary to see exactly what was happening in this interaction. Stern discovered that the mothers attempts at contact were entirely unrelated to the baby's communication. Stern reported:

Of all the mothers we had observed, this mother was the least attuned. In the course of two observations on different days, she performed no behaviour that met our criteria for affect attunement. (This usually happens once a minute, using strict criteria).

This example is very important in discovering why this baby was living in a state of deprivation even though he was touched often and with the mother's obviously good intentions. He was living with a deprivation which was deeply rooted at the heart of his sensation of physical contact. The mother had never had any "effectiveness" in her contact with the baby. She was out of tune, not meeting the affect-motoric expressions of the baby. It therefore looked like a dialogue but it was a monologue from the mother, leaving the baby in a state of deprivation and abandonment.

It is important to clarify that if there is no resonance in the contact communication, what is left is abandonment as a consequence of this repeated mismatch that does not create sense, does not create meaning and without which there is deprivation.

2. Implicit Knowledge

I have been accompanying people whose personality structure or behaviour is based on the way they sense in their body, the organism that gained life during their development since babyhood. The baby lives embedded in synesthesia, sounds, temperatures, colours and smells.

In clinical practise we can find good examples of how the organism, in its reaction to situations in childhood, maintains in adult life the same

responses as if dealing with past situations. This is not the Freudian unconscious, but the non-verbal and non-conscious experience learned by the body through its interactions. We will see more about that next chapter.

Implicit knowledge develops without awareness through the dynamic of the baby's communication. The knowledge is developed through the capacity of “matching” and “mismatching”, in a discontinuity manner that passes through “attunement”, “rhythm”⁶⁰ and “resonance”. The first steps of intersubjectivity according to Stern, give the baby early abilities, with the result that his sense of self comes from this intersubjectivity.

This could never have been proven without the use of video-tape and film. What this new form reveals is a back-and-forth play of non-verbal signals between infant and carer. Too fast (often faster than one per second) for the naked eye, many of these signals can be delineated and quantified only through later micro analysis. This micro analysis reveals a two-way ping-pong flow, in the interactional exchange.

A person might discover that the infant is as likely as the adult to be the one to initiate eye contact, for example. He is likely to be the first one to break contact. The baby can also give signals in the form of non-verbal metessages, whenever he wants to stop, or change the rhythm or when he needs a pause. Connection and differentiation are already at work; in limited forms, of course. This he must learn to do with his body, actively, with initiation and with agency.

2a. Inner body sensations

Inner body sensations are directly connected with the capacity of contact and resonance between a dyad in a non-verbal communication. What

⁶⁰ Rhythm from the Greek *rhuthmos* that is related to *rhein* 'to flow'.

ever one party feels in the body represents and reflects very much how the contact is being developed. Whenever a mother is with her baby, or one person with another, what the subject feels in the body can be a good reflection of the relationship.

The *inner body sensations*, as referred to by Pat Ogden⁶¹ as the numerous physical feelings through movements of all types which occur inside the body. The intestinal contraction, circulation of fluids, biochemical changes, the movements of breathing, muscle movements, etc. all cause inner body sensations.

The perception of these sensations is a result of the *interoceptors*; the sensory nerve receptors that receive and transmit sensations from stimuli originating from the interior of the body. Pat Ogden describes different kinds of interoceptors: *proprioceptors*, *interoception*, *nociceptors* and *thermoceptors*.⁶²

So, through interoceptors, inner-body sensations are constantly generated, creating states of well-being or distress. There are also *exteroceptors* known as our 5 senses that receive and transmit information from the external environment.

The implicit knowledge of the mother baby interaction relationship becomes part of the organism throughout the sensory areas referred to above. In this way the infants schematize interactive patterns well before they can talk. Before events could be verbally and symbolically represented, infants' early interactive knowledge was somehow encoded in a non-verbal register. As Stern writes in the book "First Relationship", most of the mother's behaviour

⁶¹ Ogden, Pat, *Trauma and the Body*, W.W. Norton e Company, New York, USA, 2007, pag.15

⁶² Proprioceptors: sensory nerves that terminate in joints, muscles and tendons. Interoception: the visceral sense, tells us about the movements in the internal organs. Thermoceptors: respond to temperature. (more about this on page 15 of Ogden, as indicated above)

seems to be intuitive, implicit, not following any verbalized rule.

Example: Through their culture, the native women from the Amazon region of Brazil are constantly learning how to give birth. When the delivery is approaching the native woman can have her baby alone without help from anyone else, as we can see in some videos from a clinic which learned how this is done from the natives themselves. It is highly possible, therefore, to assume that the knowledge of how to give birth is also an implicit knowledge for a woman, as is receiving and caring for the baby.

Several memories in adulthood within the psychotherapy sphere are activated by smell. One can also sense smell by memory when the context of a situation is seen inside one's self. One can sense the smell of the situation like a person's body odour, the distinctive smell of a home, etc. very easily. In this sense the smell becomes a semiotic sign for that situation which might be repeated from time to time like a ritornello in music. Deleuze and Guattari⁶³ have written that:

.... If we nominate semiology as the significant semiotic, the first is only a regime of signs in between others, and not the most important. This is why there is the need to go back to the pragmatic, in which language never possesses universality in itself, not even sufficient formalization or general semiology or a metalinguistic reference. It is then, before anything, that the studies of the significant's regime gives certification to the inadequacy of the linguistic's presuppositions, under the name of own sign's regime's. The significant's regime send to the sign, and only to the sign, infinitely.

The philosopher José Gil, in "Fernando Pessoa ou a Metafísica das Sensações"⁶⁴ ("Fernando Pessoa or the Metaphysics of Sensations")

⁶³ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Mil Platôs*, Ed.34 Ltda, São Paulo, Brasil, 1995, page 61, author's translation of text.

⁶⁴ Gil, José, "Fernando Pessoa e a Metafísica das Sensações", 'Relógio D'Água' publishing company, page 82

confirms that awareness becomes the body's awareness: because there is now no space between the interior and the exterior.

“... it is the body that feels, sees, dreams; it is the intensity-flows of the organs which become conscious [...]. Everything becomes body sensitive, the soul itself acquires the density of the flesh and expressions such as “pensar com o meu corpo” (“think with my body”), and “sonhar com a minha pele” (“dream with my skin”), mark the absence of barriers between the “spirit and the material”.

The relational patterns include affective and anticipatory cognitive aspects, such as those seen in attachment patterns after a separation. This can be seen in the stills of a film which are displayed below and in the very slow motion videos of interaction between mothers and babies.

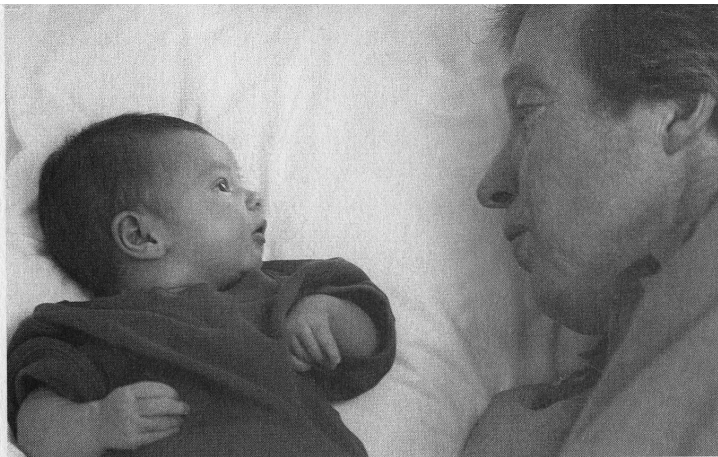
.....We are in a situation described by Lévi-Strauss: the world started to mean before we knew ‘what’ it meant, the meaning was given without therefore being known..... ...the face is the own icon to the significant’s regime , the reterritorialization within the system. The significant reterritorializes itself in the face. It is the face which gives substance to the significant, it is this which interprets its self, and changes, change traces, when the interpretation again gives significance to the substance. Look, he changed his face. The significant is always given a face.....from a pre-significant....⁶⁵

2b. Inner body sensations and communication

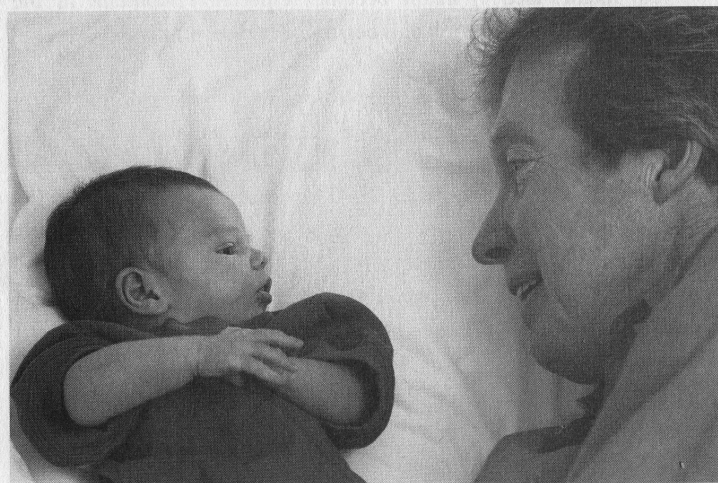
Let’s look now at a 9-day-old baby’s relationship with his grandfather:

⁶⁵ In *Mil Platôs*, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Ed. 34, São Paulo, Brasil, 1995, page 62

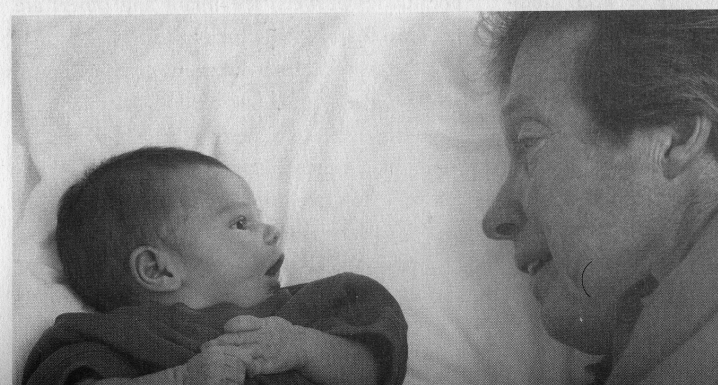
PHOTO SERIES © ELAINE SIEGEL



1 A 9-day-old baby and his grandfather have discovered each other. They begin a playful interaction while they look eye to eye.

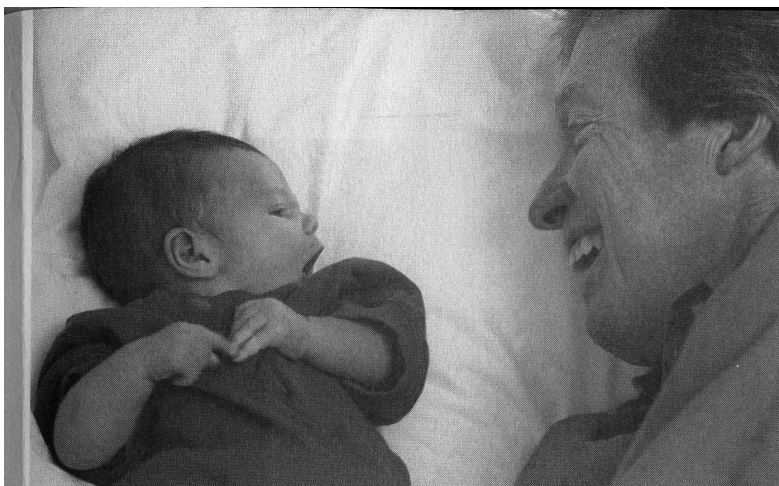


2 He observes grandfather's mouth and sees the mouth open.

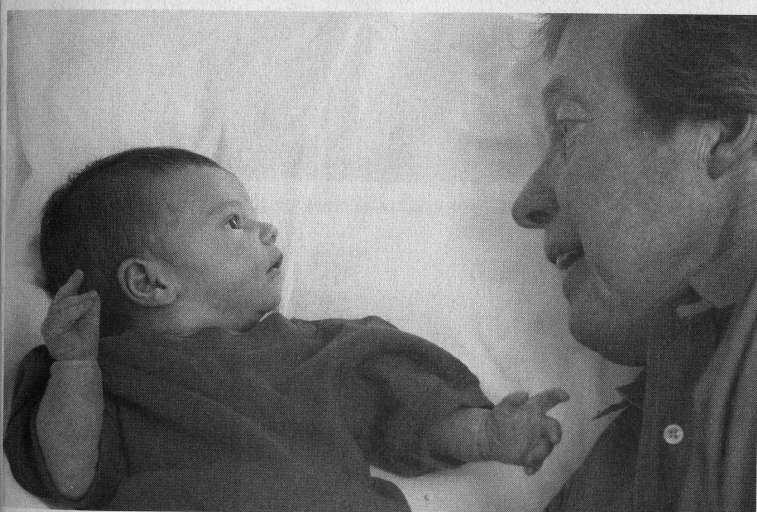


3 The baby then opens his mouth, imitating grandfather.

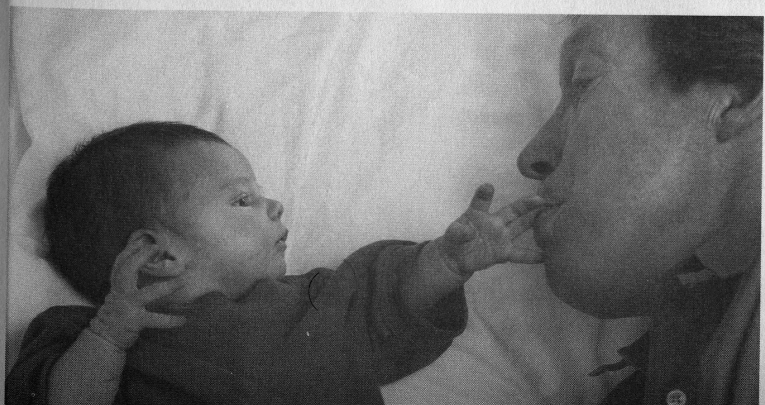
36



4 Grandfather is delighted.



5 The infant again looks eye to eye.



6 The infant now reaches for the grandfather's mouth, where the game is being played.



7 The grandfather continues to play by opening his mouth wider, which the baby observes.



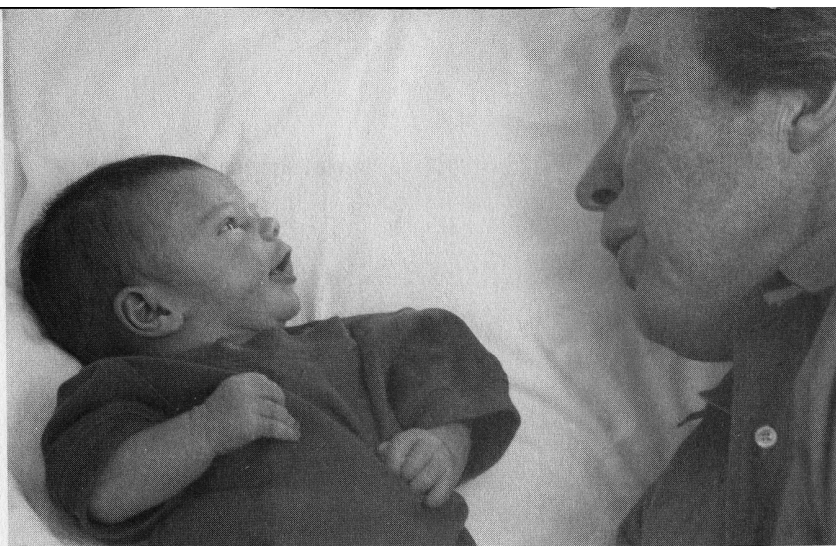
8 With great energy he follows and opens his mouth widely.



9 Both take great delight in this joyful exchange. The baby throws his head back and opens his mouth even a bit wider.



10 Grandfather raises his eyebrows, and the baby follows with his eyes.



11 Now grandfather switches to puckering his lips.



12 The baby focuses on the mouth and imitates the puckering.



13 They are both so pleased by this emotional engagement.



14 *The baby becomes serious and quiets down.*



15 *The grandfather paces himself to the baby, allowing him to turn away and rest, which is so important. All infants need frequent rest periods after intense interaction.*

It is not deliberate, self-conscious activity, but takes place at an almost unaware level of consciousness. We describe the process only because it is fun to know what is going on, not because either parent or baby needs to be coached; it comes naturally.

As parents spend time getting to know their baby, they gradually learn to put themselves in their infant's place. When they do, the signals the baby sends out to make his needs known or to elicit a response become increasingly clear. Within us all are amazing inborn systems for communicating, nurturing, and surviving.

We can see how much these interactions depend upon on what the grandfather does with his face, voice, body and hands. This flow of communication show us how an emerging experience is provided for the baby out of communication and relatedness. We can speculate that the exchange

of semiotic signs are full of symbolic information either from gesture or sensation. The “baby talk” might be quite obvious and may be extremely complex.

2c. Baby talk – genesis of the sense in the ontogenesis of the individual

In the territory of “baby talk” we can explore empirically and look at the genesis of the sense in the ontogenesis of the individual. In this empirical situation it is possible to see the emergence of the sense. Daniel Stern suggests that the sense of self depends upon the micro-interactive capacities of the baby, for example how much he interacts with his own body, his actions, feelings and thoughts as well as interacting with others.⁶⁷ During development, new capacities will appear and new ways of sensing the self will be possible.

It is in the initial rhythm that the new born has the possibility of existing in a singular way. The rhythm can be understood as an interplay of tensions and distensions between the breathing, heart beats, contraction and relaxation of muscles, by the breast feeding cycles, in the meeting of the mother’s body with the baby’s.

The rhythm is connected with the duration of life; for example, in the first intake of breath, life starts and in the last breath, life finishes. Breathing in and out is present throughout life as the rhythm between life and death.

Example: In a therapeutic process the patient was a man who used to speak a lot, in a never-ending narrative, of his life’s complaints and stories in an attempt to understand and alleviate his anguish. I could not follow or understand what he was trying to communicate to me so that I could help him.

⁶⁷ Stern Daniel, *The First Relationship*, Harvard University Press, USA, 2002

Suddenly, whilst hearing his sounds, I was able to listen to something different; something that was not in the actual words but in the sound, in the intonation, the cadence of his sentences. I told him that I could hear a music on the context, like a ritornelo repeating the same compass and beat, I repeated the cadence to him and told him that it sounded to me like he was asking for from me a permission to be a man of creation.

This came from the rhythm of the words, not in the words themselves. It made sense to him as he had had to go into the study of construction engineering and not music because his parents undervalued music, claiming that could be too risky a profession. Music was therefore in the underlines; creation was in the underlines.

Deleuze wrote that:

“...there is no art that is not also a liberation of life forces, there is no art of death”.

He was in fact contacting his forces to liberate his art, and the message came out through musical signals, that could only be heard and interpreted from a state of art in the profession.

3. Winnicott and mutuality

In the text “The mother infant experience of Mutuality”⁶⁸(1969), Winnicott wrote about a therapy session with a 40 year old patient to demonstrate how they came to a subjective meaning through rhythm contact:

(..) and it ended with her head in my hands.

Without a deliberate action from either of us, a rhythm of lulling developed. The rhythm was quite quick, about 70 per minute (heart beats) and I had

⁶⁸ In Safra, Gilberto, *A Face Estética do Self*, Ed. Unimarco, São Paulo, Brazil,

some trouble in adapting myself. Without embargo, we found ourselves, in a mutually lightly expressed, but persistent movement of lulling. Without words we were communicating with each other, and this was happening at a level of development that did not demand any more maturity from the patient than that which we will discover at the dependence phase in the analytical process.....

This shared lulling experience illustrates what I wanted to say in the initial stages of caring for the baby. The main thing is the communication between the mother and baby in terms of anatomy and physiology of the living bodies. The theme can be easily developed and the importante phenomenon will be the basic proof of life's essence; like the heart beating, breathing, the heat of the chest and other movements. Pag. 200.

This clinical point is very interesting because a borderline patient needs a shared experience to regain the sensation of limits.

When mutual regulation is particularly successful, it is a moment when appropriate forms of meaning (affects, relations, representations) from one's person consciousness come into line with the meaning of another person, the moment which Edward Tronick⁶⁹ hypothesized was when a *dyadic* state of consciuosness emerges. This is not merely an intersubjective experience, but has dynamic effects, increasing the coherence of consciousness in both people, with communication becoming critical and necessary for development in the dyadic regulatory processes that affect their consciousness.

3a. Organism and shape in Jacques Fontanille

The work of Fontanille presents to me doubts and controversies especially the theme of continuity/discontinuity in relationships. But at this point I am picking up another dimension of his work that makes sense for me:

⁶⁹ Tronick, Edward, *How Co-creative Processes Generate Unique Mother-Infant and Patient-Therapist Relationships and Change Other Relationships*, article from Internet.

In the universe of sensation in the philosophical and psychological tradition there are two important dimensions: the *Kinaesthesia*⁷⁰ and the *Aisthesis*⁷¹. The first puts together sensations of movement from the sensitive, contact organs with the pulse (contraction and expansion) of the muscles (flesh).

So, according to Fontanille,⁷² the sensory universe is already organized into two areas (movement and posture). Movement is connected to the quality of 'force' and posture by the quality of 'shape'. If kinesthesia (sensitivity to movement) is something already understood, we cannot say the same of 'aisthesis' (internal sensation independent of movement). But we can say that aisthesis is the general and immediate connection of all sensations in the only place common to them all: the shape of the body, represented and shown through and on the skin that encases the organism.

Even though I do not agree with some of the ideas of Fontanille on the process of indifferentiation⁷³, it is possible to make connections and analogies between the body's shape in psychotherapy and the development of the human being. The shape (organism + skin) works as an icon and as an index: an icon from the instance of an *attanziale*'s shaped from contraction and relaxation (pulsation) of the organism, becoming somehow frozen as part of the culture⁷⁴; an index of an equilibrium out of those superficial tensions coming from the flesh.

All this will form a semiotic figure that in the second chapter we will look at from a psychotherapeutic view of the body. The organism is connected

⁷⁰ awareness of the position and movement of the parts of the body by means of sensory organs (proprioceptors) in the muscles and joints, from the Greek Kinein 'to move' + aisthesis 'sensation'.

⁷¹ vague sensation, internal sensibility, independent of the action of the senses, common sensation, from the Greek Koinós + aisthesis

⁷² Fontanille, Jacques, *Figure Del Corpo*, Meltemi Editore, Roma, 2004, pa. 196

⁷³ idem

⁷⁴ Frozen here means static, without movement from a fundamental point of view, giving the necessary grounding for an unstable situation. This grounding will be based on an insecure and often traumatic relationship that is not in a healthy state. More about grounding later on.

with the inner life of a person, i.e., it is related to how the invisible feels, senses and relates to the world. Skin is related to that which our bodies show of our inner selves to the world, and at the same time to how we collect information from the outside for transmission to the inside, or even for blocking the internalization of what comes from the outside and vice-versa.

In terms of movement and shape⁷⁵ there is always an interaction between 'force' and 'substance', *energy and flesh*. For Fontanille the meeting of both creates a 'form' that takes place between the two agents. In *movement and intentionality*⁷⁶ he points out that there is a direct collaboration between both concepts and reminds us that psychoanalysis acknowledges that there is psychic movement in an intentional direction, showing us that this is not only seen by phenomenology.

In Freud for example, the 'partial' drive defines itself by *movement-scope*, influx movement, assimilated physically or visibly, and implicated by the instance *attanziali*.

But is Merleau-Ponty acknowledging this subject when affirming the natural bond between movement and intention:

Our intention meets the others' natural dress⁷⁷ or the other's incarnation in certain movements, and in its own self's expression as the thing expresses itself in their prospected aspects.⁷⁸

Continuing with part of Fontanille's concepts in a fundamentally prospective semiotica, movement and intentionality create a unified whole: the

⁷⁵ I am using 'Shape' to define organism plus skin, adapting the concept of Fontanille of "involucrum".

⁷⁶ Fontanille, Jacques, *Figure Del Corpo*, Meltemi Editore, Roma, 2004, pa. 202

⁷⁷ According to Fontanille, 'dress' here is the incarnation of intentionality. "Incarnated" here is the term that re-send always for the orientation and dissymmetry of our relationship with the world.

⁷⁸ in Fontanille, Jacques, *Figure Del Corpo*, Meltemi Editore, Roma, 2004, pa. 202

intentionality is significant because it is movement towards the thing, and at the same time, the movement is significant because it is intentional: “To move one’s own body is to target to the thing through such”, said Merleau Ponty (1945).

If the argument is properly semiotic it is because it implicates *taking a position* of the soma (flesh) in the world, and from “taking a position”, a somatic posture comes to the point that each thing diverges in different aspects, each movement becomes intentional, or even “oriented”.

The correlation between movement and semiose, between sensorimotricity and the semiotic figure is not new, Merleau-Ponty (1942, pag. 243) says that the flexion is a posture where the organism possess the world, as for example a little girl holding only onto her mother or a doll or when the concentration of energy on the head and forehead is inclined in order to give special attention to something.

In the movement of extension it is possible to express abandonment or letting go for something, or even the passive capacity to occupy more space either dominating more or not dominating the environment. We will see more of this in more detail during David Boadella’s presentation on postures of the soul.

So, here we can continue to explore how semiotics is an important tool in helping in the analysis of a relationship. In the second chapter, when we get into character formation from a body psychotherapy point of view, the semiotic icons will become clearer.

As a regime of signs constitutes a semiotic, it is difficult to consider semiotics in itself as, in reality, there is always a form of content, simultaneously inseparable and independent from the form of expression.

3b. Organism, shape and the nervous system

In the organism there are two nervous systems with different functions: The Central Nervous System (CNS) and the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS). Each of them have a different function and can activate separate responses from the organism. They should generally work in conjunction as voluntary and involuntary systems. The voluntary connected to the CNS and involuntary with the ANS. The capacity of working in conjunction gives us what can be called spontaneity⁷⁹ or formative reactions from cultural processes.

Depending on the relationship between CNS and ANS, the person may develop two kinds of postures, one internal and another external, a visible and invisible semiotic⁸⁰. In my point of the relationship between the visible and invisible will develop a kind of sense semiotic, based upon the sensations.⁸¹

As we could see in the pictures above, the interactions are limited to a

⁷⁹ Spontaneity, here in the sense of a movement that puts together voluntary (conscious) and involuntary (unconscious) actions in a reflexive manner. Reflex response here is a response that starts by being from a stimulus of the animal organism, but in "education" becomes reflexive responses already learned from voluntary and involuntary actions. The Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov, in around 1904, found that sounding a bell every time a dog was about to be given food eventually caused a reflex flow of saliva, which later persisted even when no food was produced. Elaborations of this habitual type of reflex are regarded by some physiologists and psychologists as an important basis for many behaviors, both voluntary and involuntary, and we have learned that they can also be applied to parent-child relationships during parent interventions. There is the possibility of facing up to the world without mediation. The individual may reveal herself as she really is.

⁸⁰ I am calling invisible semiotic, the production of inner signs that cannot be seen, because they stay in the inner world of a person. Those signs can be images, sensations, smells, they can be connected with something objective like inner body sensations or something subjective like images. This postulation is based upon the next footnote on Umberto Eco's comment.

⁸¹ "Not only are words signs but also gestures, images, non-linguistic sounds like the chimes of Big Ben. Obviously devices (such as flags) created by man in order to indicate something are signs, but so are, in ordinary language, the thread of smoke that reveals a fire, the footsteps in the sand that tells Robinson Crusoe a man has passed along the beach, the clue that permits Sherlock Holmes to find the murderer." (Umberto Eco, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1973)

set of expressions needed at this point of development to regulate and mark major nodal points in the flow. According to Daniel Stern, the most basic set of signals for this purpose would be: to initiate, to maintain or modulate, to terminate and to avoid a social interaction.⁸²

Affection develops in the quality of these interactions and meanings are created during this process; as Winnicott would say: “meanings are the imaginative elaboration of the body sensations”, for example: ‘love is fundamentally heat’ is the quality of the meeting between one body and other body. A place that ‘has’ the presence of the ‘other-quality’ - where the baby feels that she is holding onto somewhere she can relax into gravity and infinite space⁸³.

The rhythm is the fundamental element from where we constitute the attune between maternal body and the baby. The rhythm emerges from the attune between bodies – the mother recognizes the baby as a being and she mirrors what she sees, for this the mother needs to be well rooted in her body with what she sees and feels in the corporeity of the baby.

Babies do not have the same rhythm pattern, the baby is also sensitive to the tonicity of the other’s body, if the other’s body contains her body, if it is syntonic or not. If there is no containment and no attunement it creates a sensation of falling or of space without limits, changing the whole structure of the baby.

The syntonic rhythm comes from the empathic body’s availability of the mother, giving to both of them the possibility of primary creativity. The gesture of the baby is a gesture that presents a rhythm which creatively gives the

⁸² Stern, Daniel, *The First Relationship*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, USA, 2002.

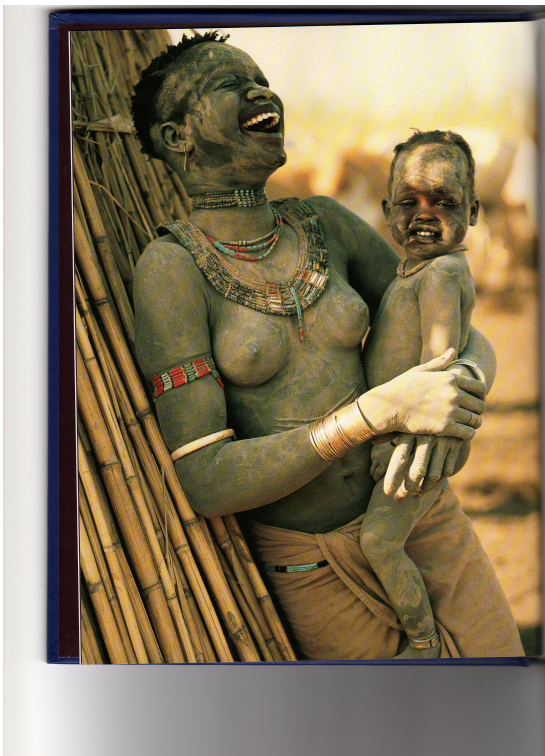
⁸³ A sensation of no limits in space, but with grounding. Grounding is a Winnicottian concept that was created to explain the sense of security the baby feels on the mother's arms,, that was expanded to a sense of security and centring on the earth's ground.

baby a chance to go in the other's direction. Rhythm and breathing are directly influenced by the relationship between CNS and ANS.

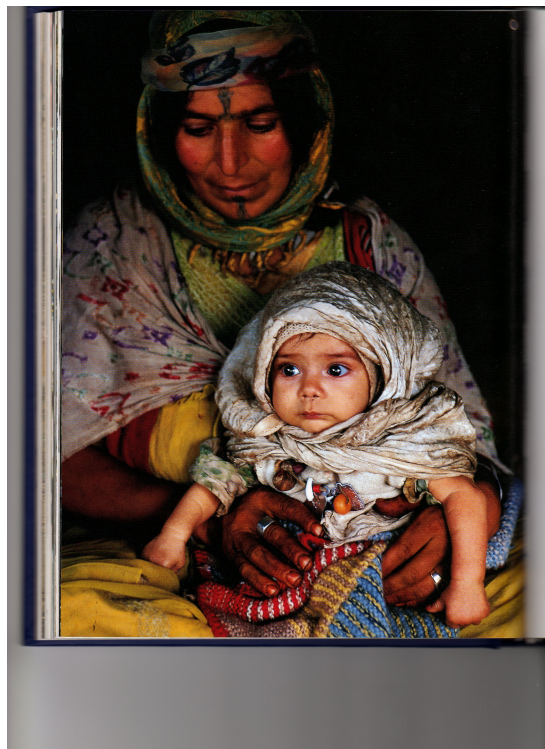
3c. Culture, codes and expressions

It is not only the baby's body that has a singularity that comes from rhythm. In different cultures there are different sensation peculiarities, meaning we can say that each baby presents herself to the world from a peculiar rhythm, and the mother's body is available to the baby in an organized way, welcoming what she sees in the baby but connected with the statutes of the possibilities of the ethnic culture of the mother's baby.

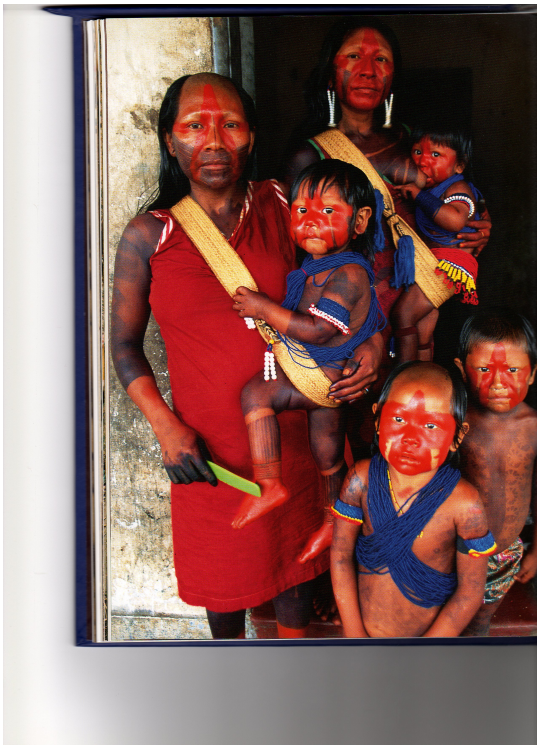
Sudan Mamma Dinka



Marroco



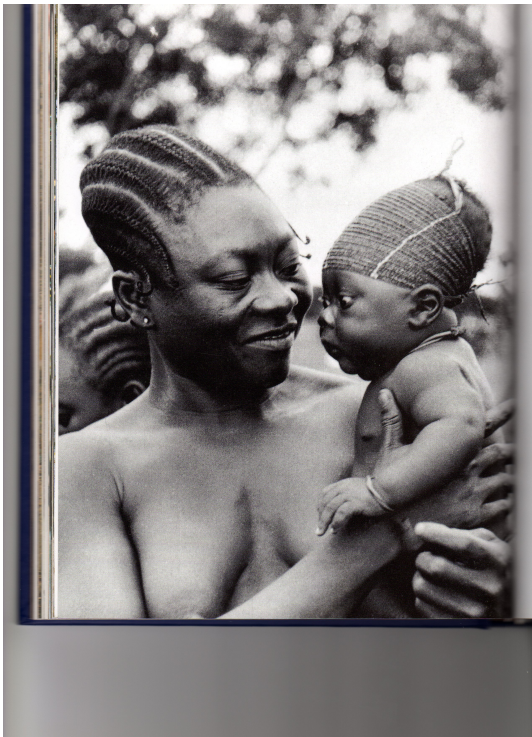
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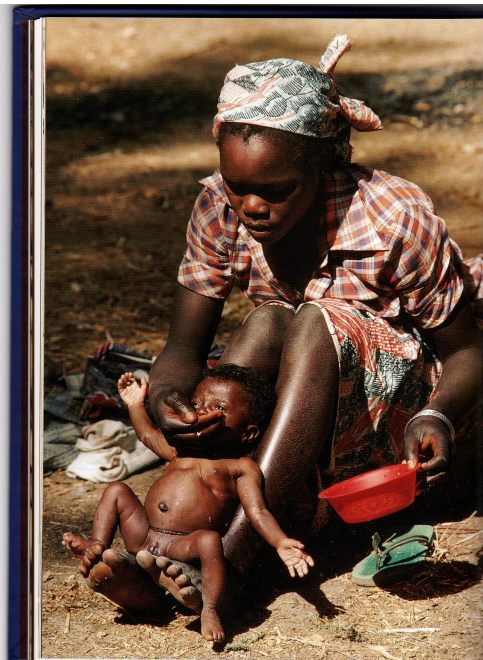
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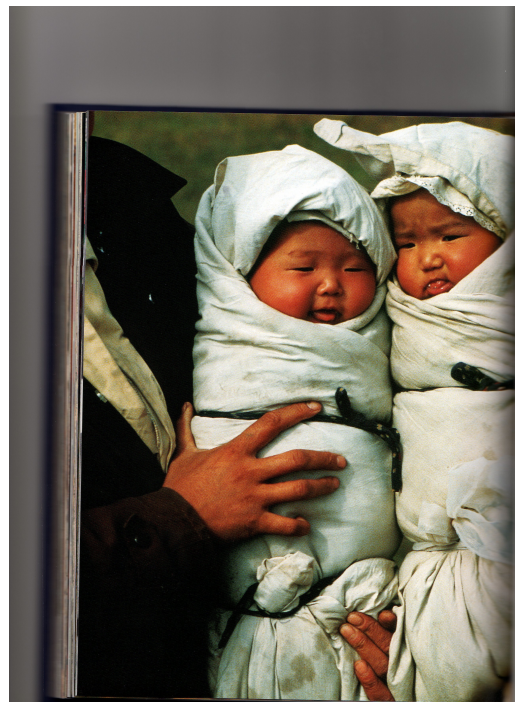
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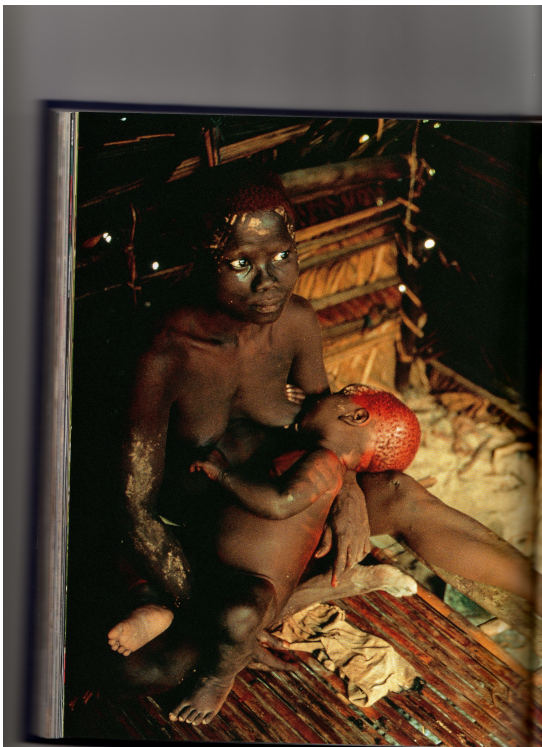
Australia



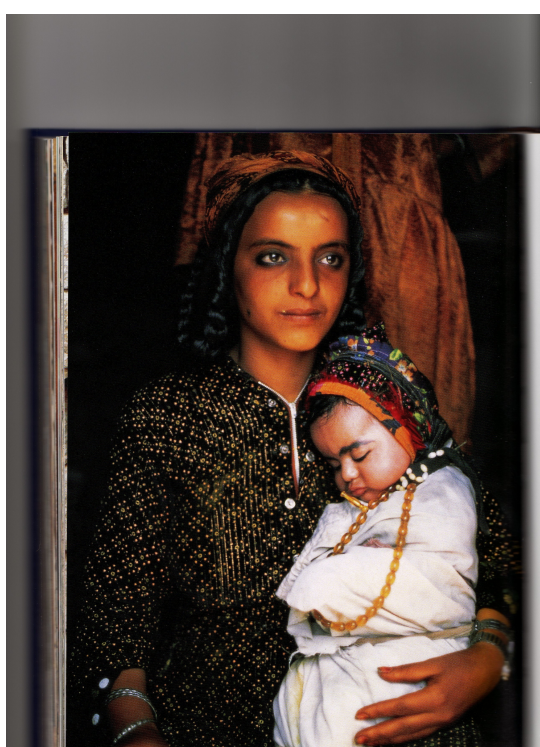
Mongolia



Isole Andaman



Yemen



Brasil



From this experience we can say and see that each ethnic culture will create a different rhythm and tuning - and as a consequence different codes, different ways of expression, affection, different meanings and signs. For each culture therefore, the visible and invisible semiotics will have their own singularities.

It is interesting to notice that the babies expressions are not so different between cultures and we can recognize the emotions in any culture especially with babies, but the codes that are being formed are different.

The organization of the baby's body comes from the way the mother takes care of her, meaning her actions, movement, sensitivity and emotions. In the videos we can better see and analyse the interaction during movement, mainly using the speed techniques of slow and very slow motion that are available today.

The video has an important dreaming dimension that preserves the memory of the experiences in the body, so when we analyse it together the

experience stays with the participants.

As we can see it is difficult to feel a human being without community, any rupture of the community hurts the ethos of the baby, the mother organizes and means the baby oriented by the community, and the community is present even by absence.

Quoting Stern:⁸⁴ ‘What is a relationship and how is it established?’. The baby learns with someone, creating and sharing experiences from where the relationship is built. Besides feeding and warmth, there is the creation of pleasure, joy, curiosity, and many other phenomena and experiences that make up friendship, love and the creation of meaning during the primary interactions as an origin of semiosis.

The semiotic process is another aspect of the subject formation. In this way, as Patrizia Violi showed in one of her seminars:

“The process of semiotization and the process of subjetivation are two components of the same process, either the meaning formation grows together, or it is build together with the meaning of the self as a subject”

4. Daniel Stern: development and the sense of the Self

In each semiotic activity at this stage of development (sensations, perceptions) the body is the place where things are happening.

The work of Stern in the four categories of the *Self* (Guattari, 1992), deal with the several patterns of harmony and disharmony that take place during the relationship between parents and children, and which help us to understand the subjective character of the relationship. The first two forms of

⁸⁴ Stern, Daniel, *The First Relationship*, Harvard University Press, 2002, USA

disharmony or lack of communication are super-stimulation and sub-stimulation. These two forms of 'dis-encounter' create patterns of interference in the contact between parents and children. Extreme forms of sub-stimulation can be transformed into privation, whilst the opposite can occur with extreme forms of super-stimulation which can be transformed into invasion.

Both forms cut or deviate the dialogue, the communication and the child's ability to adjust to a kind of contact that supports development that is sufficiently positive in relation to their needs. He explained that up until two years old, four hierarchic layers of the self are in development:

1. The *sense of the emerging self* from birth to two months old (I and the other).
2. The *sense of the nucleous self* from two/three months old until seven/nine months old (I with the other)
3. The *sense of the subjective self* from seven/nine months to fifteen months (syntonic affection)
4. The *sense of verbal self* from fifteen months old on (emphatic interactivity).

4a. Foundations and the Ontological Model

The psychoanalyst Felix Guattari adds that each of the components continue to exist in parallel to each other and that at any moment they can rise to the surface according to the needs.

At this point, Stern gives up basic concepts of Freudian psychoanalytical developmental phases and considers a series of possibilities of new subjective developmental formations, so that we could say there is the birth of a *scriptural self*, of a *puberty self*, etc.⁸⁵ From this point of view we can see development as a flow of life.

⁸⁵ Guattari, Felix, *Caosmose*, Ed. 34, page.155, São Paulo, Brazil.

The formation of bond development, an intersubjective entity (Stern calls it an 'evoked friend', due to its abstract character) works as a "happening" in the considered period. Guattari compares this kind of affect to the hearing of a phrase in the music of Debussy or to a work of art that are universes of extreme complexity.

The mother, putting her self in relation to the baby, with her action, allows that the baby's self is allowed to happen, is given a field for the baby to be an existent being. (Gilberto Safra, 1999).

The model below, drawn up by English psychologist Frank Lake, who specialized in pre-natal studies, presents the analogy of a child being born and metaphorically entering the "channel of its life". During the first moments, the relationship between the new-born baby and the mother is sensitive and unconscious. As such, the baby, little by little, starts to incorporate the image and the sensations of the mother's presence.

Frank Lake affirms that as the baby does not have the ability to have a separate personal existence, it can only conceive of itself as "being" or "existing", only through "identification" or "osmosis" with the "being" and the body of the mother.

The relationship occurs at the "sensitive" level and serves as a pre-approaching of the consciousness. We can see, therefore, in the first illustration below, that according to Frank Lake⁸⁶, how a sufficiently good development of a child will be following birth, where the first phase justifies the baby's sensation of existence, and the second phase reaffirms this sensation, but already at a maintenance level of existence, "a well existing" or "well being".

These two phases will be important bases for the sufficiently good development of self-esteem and the desire for fulfillment, the possibilities of

⁸⁶ Lake, Frank, *The Dynamic Cycle, Introduction to the Model*, Lingdale Papers 2, Clinical Theology Association, Oxford, England, 1986

assimilation and successful development, will depend upon how the “mother” will deal with the accidents and micro-accidents in the “empirical form” of the relationship, updating the forces of unexpected situations through sensation.

In the second illustration we can further see that which, according to Lake, could occur if both the first and second phases are rejected. The consequences would thus be the first and deepest marks upon the character and somatic development, the accidents here would modify the expected trajectory in a very serious manner, they no longer being just accidents, but becoming trauma, with the force of the “mother’s” negative traits falling on the baby.

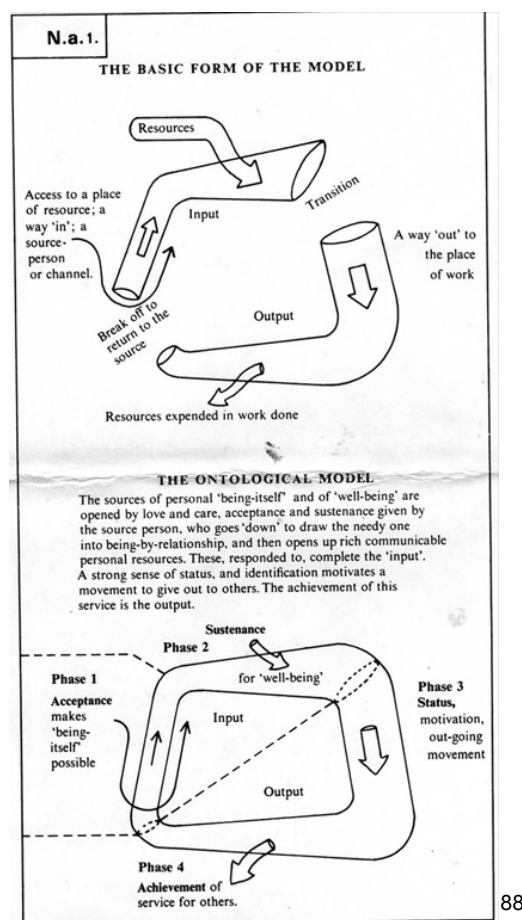
Deleuze would call them “new foundations”, as it is in going deep to the core, in going to the depths, that the sensations are formed, and the baby can “fall” into the “arms of the ‘mother’” or can fall into a bottomless pit, being able to hold onto at the edges, forming the new character's foundations.

It is when the mother take the baby to her that the child starts to form its existential foundations, as well as cling to the edges. When there is no possibility of clutching to anything, the tendency may be for the formation of psychotic nuclei, in which the child simply falls into itself, without the reference of the other, concrete and subjective, from there omnipotently creating the necessary images inside himself for his survival as the last resort and abstract foundation upon which to remain in this world.

He communicates with himself to such an extent, that he always sees the other as part of himself.

The Ontological Model of Frank Lake⁸⁷

The source of “being” and “well being” is opened by love and care, acceptance and support (sustenance) provided by the “source person”, going inside the “need” to the “being behind the relationship”. In this way, the communication lies between personal “sources”. This input provides a strong sensation of “status”, and the identification motivates the movement outside the channel. The realization is expressed outwardly. The source of 'being' and 'well being' strengthen the capacity of differentiation/indifferentiation.



Phase I – “Acceptance” makes it possible for “being” to belong to the world, by the container offered by the mother. “Being” being possible, it gives the good grounding for the possibility of connexion/separation.

⁸⁷ Lake, Frank, *The Dynamic Cycle, Introduction to the Model*, Lingdale Papers 2, Clinical Theology Association, Oxford, England, 1986

⁸⁸ Idem

Phase II – “Sustenance” creates and provides conditions for the “well being”. Sustenance provides and strengthen the capacity to connexion/separation, indifferentiation/differentiation.

Phase III – “Status” provides motivation for the movement of communication in an outward direction.

Phase IV – “Realization” is the capacity of someone to place themselves at the world’s service.

In the following illustration, number 2, which Lake calls “The Womb of the Spirit” or the relationship between “Me and You”, we can see the four phases in a little more detail, including, at the start of phase III, a period of transition involving the start of the experience of consciousness raising over the separation of “one person” into “two people” which carry in their essence the previous experiences which will give it consistency for the following experiences of establishing the “status of an individual” and later place itself at the service of human relations.

In illustration number 3, Lake considers the consequences of what he calls the “loss of being”. The baby, in its genetic fight for survival, looks for new paths to keep it in the world, forming survival channels which avoid the obstacles imposed by negation and update the forces of unexpected means, but which will be - if they are continue in the future - formers of character postures (behavioural and bodily), as we can see in the illustrated examples. The escapes may lead to characterological formations of behaviour, as well as postural deformities in muscular order:

1. Schizoid, which the Danish psychotherapist Lisbeth Marcher⁸⁹ calls “mental existence”, in which the child energetically removes himself from the

⁸⁹ The Bodydynamic System was founded by Lisbeth Marcher in Denmark. Lisbeth Marcher developed the basis of Bodydynamic (Analysis) from the late 60's and up through the 70's by observing correlations between muscular response and different psychological processes. Some of this work was done in collaboration with several of the later senior members of Bodydynamic Institute. From the early 80's, and especially from 1985 when the Bodydynamic Institute, Copenhagen, expanded from 4 to 10 members, all workings on the theoretical and methodological development was shared by senior members of the Bodydynamic Institute,

environment, keeping himself inside with a fear of disappearing. The peripheral muscles become more tense.

2. Hysterical, which Lisbeth calls “emotional existence”, the reaction to the external threat, which in this case is provided by an emotional explosion towards the environment, as this is threatening to disappear. The peripheral muscles become more tense.

3. Oral, which without the container of the mother may lose the understanding of “who I am” through the profound anxieties of separation, leading to postures of resignation, abandonment and desperation. The muscles become more flacid with out power.

4. In the next phase, in the “well being”, the risk lies in the loss of the well being which leads to deep feelings of phobia and paranoia, since no one wants to lose the ground which provides one with the sensation and pleasure of life and which constitute one’s deepest security.

Phases I and II are considered passive since they are almost entirely dependent upon the mother or the care provider, while phases III and IV may be considered active owing to the child already developing more contact with the environment. It is important to say that we think dependence in phases 1 and 2 as a whole, because if we look more precisely through videos or films,

though still under the main responsibility of Lisbeth Marcher. Some of these inspirational sources are: Pedagogical theory and tradition (Neill, Makarenko, Vygotsky , danish "little schools",etc). Animal etiology (The first one being Konrad Lorentz). Theory of motor-perceptual development including its correlation to psychological and social development (a well developed and acknowledged tradition in Denmark and Norway - E.g.: Danish Britta Holle, the books of whom have been translated into 11 languages, and english speaking authors Jean Ayres and Ashley Montagu). Norwegian traditions concerning psychosomatic connections: (Psychiatrist, neurologist and psychoanalyst Tryggve Braatøy, Physiotherapist Edel Bülow-Hansen and Physiotherapist Lillemor Johnsen). Developmental Psychology (Piaget, Erikson, Bruun (Gesell, Ulin) and Stern); Psychodynamic theory. Humanistic Psychology, including TA (Transactional Analysis) (Schiff, Erskine, Goulding, Steiner and Maslow). Patient-centered Therapy (Rogers), and Gestalt Therapy. LifeMODE Analysis - originally based on class-specific theory of socialization, as inspired by Marxistic psychology (Lorentzer, Brückner), later developed to have a more subcultural and cultural focus (Thomas Højrup and other danish ethnologists and anthropologists).

Body psychotherapy (Reich, Boadella, Lake), Pre- and Perinatal Psychology (Rank, Mirdal, Lake, VERNY, Chamberlain), PTSD (Pavlov, Isaacs, Kirsch, Kohlrieser, Levine, Wilson, van der Kolk, Buus-Jensen, Herman), Spirituality (Native American Shamans, Jes Bertelsen, Tibetan Lama), Group development (Sjølund, Hjelholdt, Schutz)

we can see that the relationship dependence/independence, or connexion/separation starts since birth, even at this early time the baby already feels the necessity to stay independent from the caretaker.

Illustration 2:

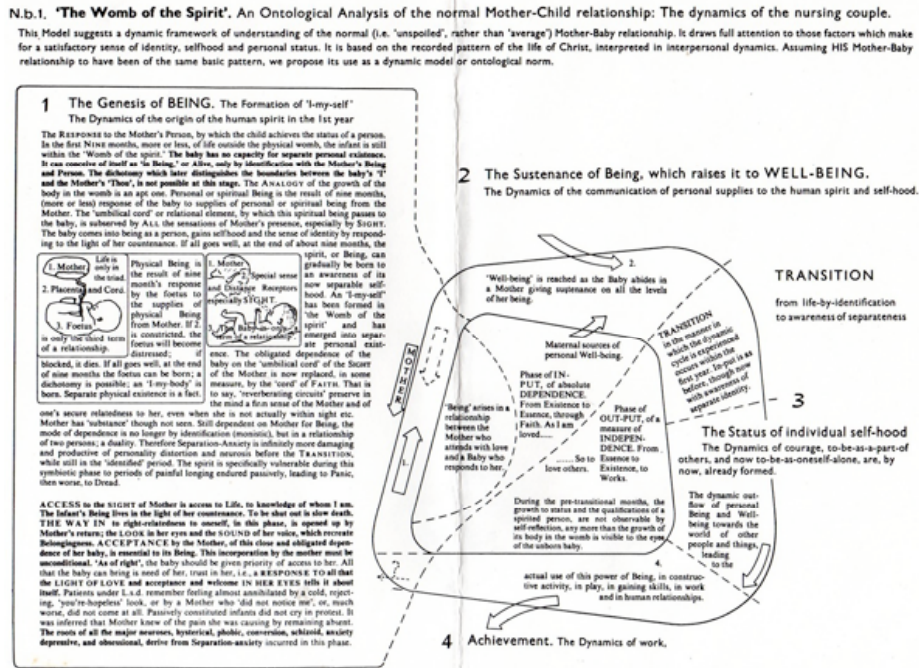
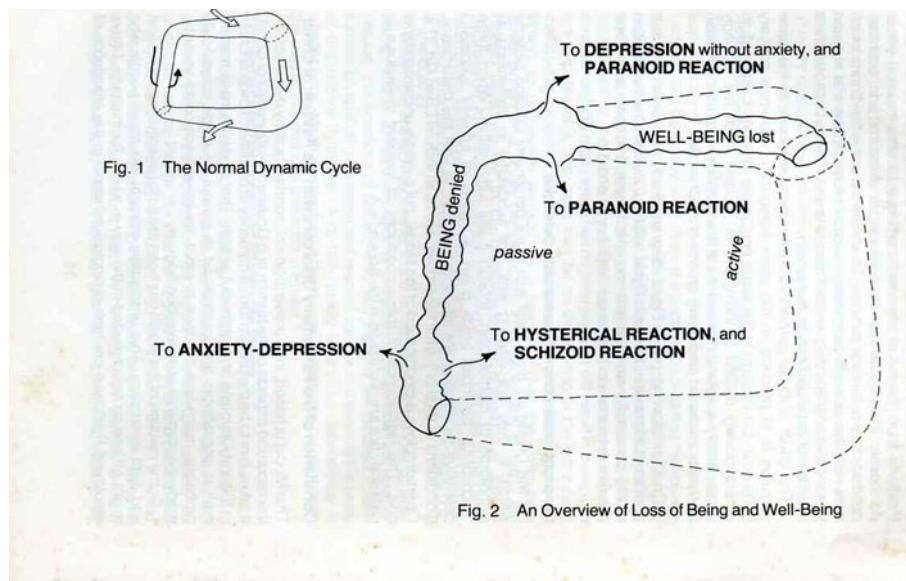


Illustration 3



⁹⁰ Lake, Frank, *The Dynamic Cycle, Introduction to the Model*, Lingdale Papers 2, Clinical Theology Association, Oxford, England, 1986

We would expect that a block to the mother-baby relationship in phase 1 of the cycle, where the baby must wait for "being itself" through the coming of the mother to attend to it in person, would reduce the power of being-in-relatedness which the infant has retained from previous well functioning cycles.

Lake would affirm that this would register as a painful diminution of good spirits, a loss of confidence if not of hope, with a concomitant increase of anxiety. It would be recorded also as a verdict about interpersonal relationships, namely that when one is helplessly dependent on them, they let you down.

To lose being-itself is an almost irremediable disaster. It is of all things the most destructive of the life of the organism as we have defined it and our predictions (Lake's) are sustained in the analytic findings of the most severe personalities, hysterical, schizoid, phobic, obsessional and anxiety depressive reactions, all seem to stem from interruptions of what is designated as phase 1.

In phase 2 the source person cannot or does not make the experience of "abiding" for sustenance not providing a satisfactory, meaningful and fulfilling experience. The baby is identified, not with gracious mothering, but with loss of rights and humiliation. The mouth-breast relationship brings not satisfaction. The sense of well being is lost or frustrated by lovelessness, ignorance or other inadequacies in the mother. Several symptoms are felt and incorporated by the baby as a response to the quality of the relationship, transforming and deviating his what would be his normal psychophysical development.

Phase 3 implies eventually in a conscious moving away from the "source-person", strong in the sense of status, with the identity of one who

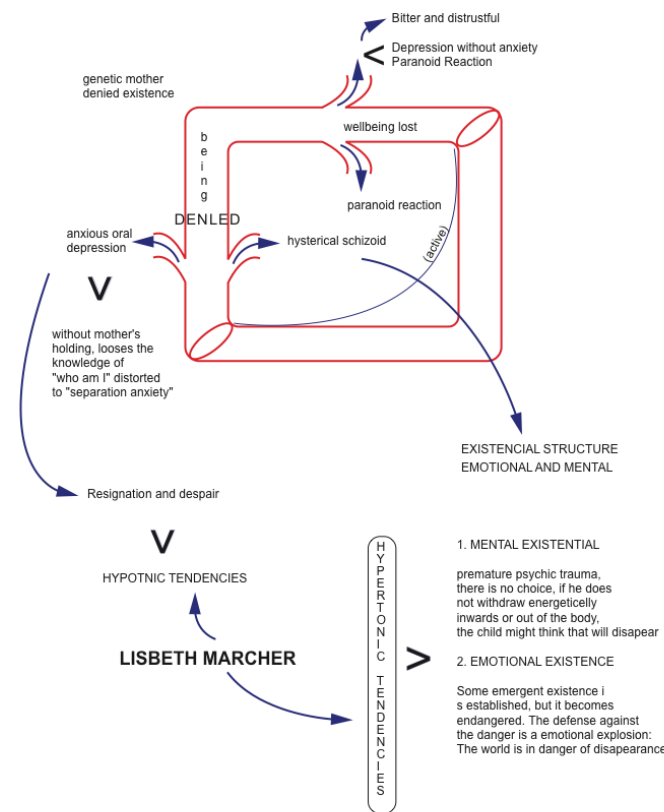
⁹¹ Lake, Frank, *The Dynamic Cycle, Introduction to the Model*, Lingdale Papers 2, Clinical Theology Association, Oxford, England, 1986

exists as a whole person. In this phase implies readiness on the source-person to permit the necessary degree of separation to occur.

Phase 4, the block in this phase may occur by the denial of the right or possibility of achievement of some work or skill or service that is personally and socially meaningful.⁹²

Lost of the "being" and "wellbeing"

Frank Lake

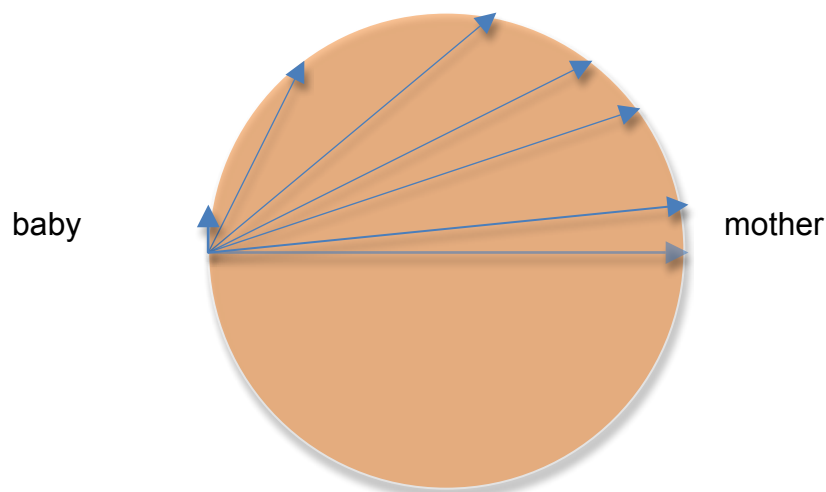


⁹² More about that in: *Lake, Frank*, The Dynamic Model, Introduction to the Model, Lingdale paper 2, Clinical Theology Association, St. Mary's House, Church Westcote, Oxford, England, 1986.

5a. Action and meeting

The action that does not meet the mother, or the action that does not meet the baby, or that they never meet together, develops patterns of disharmony by meeting with nothing. The action that meets the other in harmony, attunement, becomes a gesture, the pulsation of the meeting is humanizing: “The gesture is the poetry of the act”.⁹³

Albert Pesso of Harvard University puts the development of the baby in the following map of continue expanding energy contact: The baby is always searching for contact if the mother is not there, the father, the other's possible until he comes back to him self if he cannot find anyone to interchange, creating inner representations to fullfil the lack of real people.



Gilberto Safra (*A Face Estética do Self*, 1999), upon visiting an orphanage once, went into a dormitory which was home to babies in their first year of life. There were three groups of children. In one of them the children cried out and waved their arms in the direction of whoever came into the room. Another group remained indiferent to the appearance of anyone, but kept on with some kind of activity such as bouncing rhythmically, or pulling and eating their hair. In the third group, the nurses had immense difficulties in feeding them, and it was possible to see the dramatic situation of those children, because they were about to loose the creative gesture of the *self's life*, risking death, if they

⁹³ Galard, J. in Safra, Gilberto, *A Face Estética do Self*, 1999, São Paulo, Brazil.

lost the capacity of expression from the creative chaos.

The baby creates the world through her gesture, at the same time that she creates herself. As Safra would say, the gesture creates the object, but also creates the arm or any other part of the body implicated in the action, such as, for example, the capacity to acknowledge the other and the world. In always expansive movement, the *self* becomes gesture, inaugurating creation, territory, knowledge and love, aspects that can be named as the *ethos* of the being.

These aspects are of fundamental importance in the body psychotherapy clinic. For example, a patient with extreme sensitivity, despite physical use of her arms and legs, used to have immense difficulties in feeling them in affective relationships, it was like they simply did the mechanical work in obeying the messages sent by the brain. One day she became pregnant and the inner reactions of her body were strange to her. For this reason she became very much dependent on all the voices that surrounded her, especially those of the medical doctors. In one of the consultations she found herself emotionally enclosed and shouted out to all around her:

“ I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT IS GOING ON, MY BABY IS FINE AND WILL BE
BORN FINE!”

What really happened? The shout came out of inner chaos, from the generative force of life that marked a territory, an ethic. Only with this strong expression she could create a meaningful meeting with the doctors.

In her therapeutic session we had the opportunity to analyse and look at this situation again, leading us to explore how her own birth went. The patient shared the information that her mother and other relatives have commented that when she was in her mother's uterus, the mother never had the certainty that she could have the baby, out of a fear of the future work that would have

to be devoted to the baby. This tension followed the entire pregnancy and birth.

The patient, in a session where we physically explored her birth process, “came to the external world” with her hands entangled with each other and her legs in an insensible mechanical movement.

It seems that she has come into the world prepared not to move, trying not to be a weight or a problem to her mother, adapting her gesture to what the world offers to her. Her arms and legs developed long and thin, while her thorax was big and strong.

The genes come into the world with the expectation of a welcoming place. If this place is not in tune, synthesis or harmony, it could be the first form of trauma.^{94_95}

The interesting thing is that in such situations it is not sufficient to recognize that certain parts of the body are strange, insensible or do not belong to the patient, but it is necessary to recognize that it is a life experience of transference⁹⁶ and resonance⁹⁷. Either with the therapist or the therapeutic group, the patient, in a new repairing gesture, reappropriates the regions of the body as part of their *self*, establishing a new *ritornelo*⁹⁸.

5b. To communicate

To communicate here means to make contact, to exchange substances. We can ‘touch’ people with our words. We can also communicate body to body. Here communication should not be a cold intellectual process, on the contrary, it is the only way to share rich emotional feelings as part of our information to the world. When we are moved by feelings, our body

⁹⁴ Pesso, Albert, *Experience in Action: A Psychomotor Psychology*, New York University Press, 1973, USA

⁹⁵ Traumatization here also means blocking or deviating the communication from the body’s point of view.

⁹⁶ In Adler’s understanding of the therapeutic relationship, when the patient projects onto the therapist her fantasies, wishes, etc.

⁹⁷ more about this in *Boadella, David*, Transference, Politics and Narcisism, prived text, 1999

⁹⁸ Ritornelo here as a new territory, new repetition as in the theory and philosophy of Gilles Deleuze in *Mille Plateaux*.

spontaneously moves together, possibly in resonance.

To capitulate in relation to feelings means to capitulate in relation to body movement that expresses those feelings.

Wilhelm Reich described three directions for the body's movements: away from people, when we feel fear and menace, against people when we feel anger or hate and near people when we feel pleasure and love.

The contact we have with the body of another person is governed by unscrupulous taboos which control with whom contact is allowed and which parts of the body are safe to touch or not. The natural tendency to explore the environment flows together with the desire to explore one's body or other's bodies.

Intense inner forces can be found in any part of the inner world and they have a tendency to rise to the surface (skin) and to the exterior. The scientific world can be a base with which to justify and discover more details about how they function and how we can interfere with them.

David Boadella, creator of Biosynthesis Somatic Psychotherapy, defines psychotherapy like a dance. The external form of a person reflects their inner disposition. According to some somatic therapies, such as Rolfing, trying to change the body, stretching it to a new format, is when the therapist works from the outside, re-sculpting the anatomy in line with her vision of the ideal body.

In classical ballet, the dancer can learn how to stretch her body in positions required by the choreographer: her flow of movement is restricted to those required by the dance script. Some work patterns or sports deform the body

when repeated over a period of years - for example, the frozen elbow of a tennis player, cramp in a writer's finger or the curved figure of a rice farmer.

In these situations an emotional anatomy is formed in answer to the different insults to the form, or the scripts of character formation: "Stand up straight! Be a man! Give it your best! Don't cry! It doesn't work, give up! Hoplessness brings compassion!"

In contrast to these movements and postures driven by the external world,⁹⁹ there is a difference to be formed when the movement flows from the inner forces or wishes. These movements are associated with spontaneity, play, improvisation, creativity or to the grace of the sportsperson when in tune with the external challenge.

5c. Desire and movement

According to the philosopher Gilles Deleuze, wish is a will of potency and agency. When the wish is stimulated it is always in search of contact, taking us to the connection between the objective and subjective of actions: How has this form of movement happened in the organism? How is the relationship between voluntary and involuntary systems and its interferences? How will that interfere with the form (body, icon) of a person?

The non-verbal process is taking us to the study of signs and symbols that are used as mediators between the conscious and the unconscious, and during the first years of life are used as consciousness formation along with the tuning of affection.

Under this perspective, the idea of the organism, the body and affects

⁹⁹ Outside your inner self

comes from the pre-supposed idea that we are in a never ending flow of organized and disorganized information that transmits itself on different levels of communication, influencing the environment in a form that can be either coherent or not. This process bring us to the possibility of a connection between the organism and the word, so many times dissociated thereby distorting our best form of communication.¹⁰⁰

From this point of view, we can think of dance as a system of communication that in itself brings a content that defines, but it is prior to the gesture; it is a pre-gesture, defining spaces and possibilities, putting us into a state of attention to create contact, be conscientious and feel the possibilities of transformation.

The philosophers Deleuze and Guattari (A Thousand Platons, vol.4), in the chapter about “*means and rhythms*”, bring up the subject of world or universe formation, in which they propose that chaos, this immense black hole in which we make an effort to put a point at the centre, has directional components, one canal or a chain of canals that link to the addressee (or the sender to the receptor) in the transmission of a message that is situated in between two beings or objects like a path, a way. The means moves us in relation to others. Each means is always a whole and a part in constant communication, and if the means are always open to the chaos, they are always subject to invasion and deprivation. As the authors explain:

“ the reply of the means to the chaos is the rhythm, and what is in common with the chaos and the rhythm is the in-between, between means, rhythm or chaosmo (...) It is in this in-between that the chaos becomes rhythm, not necessarily, but it has a chance (...) There is rhythm if there is a transcoded passage from one way to the other ways of communication (...) The action is done in a way, however the rhythm

¹⁰⁰ Read more in Boadella, David, *Energy and Character*, vol. 31/1, Dorset, England, 1999, International Institute of Biosynthesis.

is in between means, as in between two waters, between two hours, twilight or zwielicht, Heceidade. To change way reproducing with energy, is the rhythm.”

6. Resonance and Meaning

By itself, rhythm is the communication between two parties, and may be resonant or full of interference, but always trans-codified, unequal and immeasurable. Rhythm operates in a chain, connecting itself in the transposition from-one-to-the-other.

Rhythm may put two actions into contact with each other or drive them apart, and does not operate in a rational manner, as we can see in the example of the developing of the self from Daniel Stern. Where it is asserted that in the spontaneous mother-infant relationship there is no rationality, but intentionality⁴⁰, intuition and resonance.

Plotinus¹⁰¹, a 3rd century philosopher, developed an interesting concept on perception, which was later to be followed up by Bergson: the idea of contemplation, not only in the sense of wonder or passive admiration, but in the sense of contrasting and absorbing, that takes us to the idea of activity, absorption or the contraction of elements on the physical, organic, perceptive, sensitive and intellectual levels. Vegetables contemplate light and indeed they need it for photosynthesis; the same may be applied to humans. We are therefore able to learn from the repetitive contemplation that we find within our environment.

Deleuze¹⁰² says: “Repetition for someone who contemplates is a transformation in the person that contemplates”.

⁴⁰ According to Frank Brentano all mental states (perception, memory etc.) are “about” something, or “of something”. In his own words, mental states necessarily have: “reference to a content” or “direction to an object”. This directionality or intentionality is the trace which defines the mind. (Deleuze, Gilles. *Bergsonismo*, Editora 34, São Paulo, 1999).

¹⁰¹ O'Brien Elmer, *The Essential Plotinus*, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, 1964

¹⁰² Deleuze, Gilles, *Diferença e Repetição*, Ed. Graal, São Paulo, 1985

Plotinus would say that: “Happiness is to meet something that you contemplate and absorb”.⁴¹

Spinoza says: “If the nature of the body of another person is like the nature of our own body, then our ideas about the other’s body, as we imagine it, will include an affect of our body together with the affect of the other body. Therefore, if we feel somebody like us to be affected by some affect, this imagination will express an affect in our own body, as the body of the other. Affects produce effects”.⁴²

In physical terms, resonance would be the transference of energy from one oscillatory system to another, when the frequency of the first is coincidental with one of the frequencies of the second, as if it were a temporary identification. In Nuclear Physics an elementary particle with a very short life appears to be a transition system, which is formed in interaction with other particles. Oscillation is felt in the system as an energetic vibration with different intensities.

In Biosynthesis Body Psychotherapy¹⁰³, somatic resonance is something we feel in our body, and the intensity and significance of it will depend on the capacity of both bodies to process whatever they receive. Intensity and values will then be interconnected with the different stages of development of the patients (and this is also true for the therapist). In this situation, it means the inter-subjectivity of object relations.

6a. Dance and Communication

The movement of a child’s body expands itself through modulations, which characterize development and learning. The quality of the encounter will depend upon gestures: tenderness, anger, sheltering and so on. There is

⁴¹ Plotino, *Tratados da Enéadas*, Polar Editorial e Comercial, São Paulo, 2002.

⁴² Spinoza, in Boadella, David. *Energy and Character vol. 30/1*, p.14, London 1999.

¹⁰³ A stream of psychotherapy that works with the body create by David Boadella, originally in England, now based in Switzerland. (www.biosynthesis.org)

a kind of dance between the child and the world, which, beyond movement and creation, expresses itself subjectively. People that didn't have the opportunity to experiment with this dance can become what we call a "robotic personality", without rhythm or melody. I quote here a small text by Isadora Duncan, from the book by Gilberto Safra(1999):

[...] my desire is to give them back the natural movements. We see in animals, plants, waves and wind the beauty of these movements. All things in nature have forms of movement that correspond to the most intimate being. The primitive man still has these movements, and as we start from this point we should try to create beautiful and significant movements of human culture — movements that, not rejecting the laws of gravity, put themselves in harmony with the movement of the Universe.

This idea follows me all the time and I see waves arising from all the things. Sitting here, looking through the trees, they also seem to me a pattern which follows wavelines. We can think of them from another point-of-view: every energy expresses itself by means of this undulating movement; does not sound and light travel in waves? And when we come to free and natural movements, we see that they also conform themselves to the law of wave movement. A bird flying, for instance, or an animal jumping. It is the shifting between attraction and resistance to the law of gravity that creates this wavelike movement.⁴³

Understanding movement takes place through contention and distension, which confronts us all the time throughout life. George Downing's¹⁰⁴ research at the Salpetriere Hospital into affect-motoric schemes (which in Biosynthesis is called Motoric Fields¹⁰⁵) has a lot to teach us about these significant nonverbal communication patterns.

⁴³ Safra, Gilberto, *A face estética do self*, pp. 29 and 41, Unimarco, São Paulo, 1999.

¹⁰⁴ Downing, George, *Body and Word*, Koselverlag, Munich, Germany, 1997

¹⁰⁵ Boadella, David, *Correntes da Vida*, Summus Editorial, São Paulo, 1995.

In corporal psychotherapy, resonance is a kind of nonverbal communication, with different names:

1. Wilhelm Reich: Vegetative Identification.¹⁰⁶
2. Jay Stattman: Organic Transference.¹⁰⁷
3. Stanley Keleman: Somatic Resonance.¹⁰⁸
4. Kernberg: Primitive Unity of Objectal Relations.¹⁰⁹

Every being has its own vibration characterizing it and carrying a specific code, which then transforms itself into an environment. This code is defined by a vibratory repetition. At the same time, each code has a continuity possibility to shift from one environment to another and to mix.

This is the way that a dance is formed, a rhythm between these two environments. From this rhythm, territory is born, at the exact moment when environments and rhythms lose their self-directions and begin to give dimension to space.

From each one here there are born expressive qualities that will define territory, just as, for example, the issue of how the infant develops the ability to understand the other. Is this done through the face, through sound or through touch? Children have part of their routine fixed, in a play of relationships, in a proto-conversation which develops inter-subjectivity.

At each stage of development the meaning of other people to the infant keeps changing, codes keep changing, so do environments and rhythms, and new territories continue to be established. Inter-subjectivity is also established through harmony. *Territory is the product of environments and rhythms brought down to earth.*

¹⁰⁶ Reich, Wilhelm, *The Function of the Orgasm*, Farrar, Atrous and Giroux, New York, NY, USA, 1968

¹⁰⁷ Statman, Jay in *Unitive Bodypsychotherapy, Collected papers vol. 2*, AFRA Publishers, Frankfurt, Germany, 1991

¹⁰⁸ Keleman, Stanley, *Somatic Reality*, Berkeley, Centre Press, 1979, *Emotional Anatomy*. Berkeley: Center Press.

¹⁰⁹ Kernberg, Otto, *Object Relations Theory and Clinical Psychoanalysis*

6b. Creating territory

At first, territory determines distance. In Deleuze's words¹¹⁰, territory has got nothing but distances. It is sealed by bodies, sound and touch, thus forming its *ethos*. Gradually the infant starts showing its qualities, gets a name, a way of being, a *bios* that brands its own way of living. Territories can be marked and exist between two parties on various levels. The person that does not succeed in building territories may have a psychotic life, without any notion of limits or of the other's space.

C. B. Bakker, in his book *No Trespassing! Explorations in Human Territoriality*⁴⁴ defines territories as potentials that may be reductionist in relation to Deleuzian territory, but may also help us to understand the concept, as is shown below:

1. **Spatial Territory** — Which is my personal space? Where do I feel safe? What feelings do I have when I feel invaded?
2. **Corporal Territory** — What is the boundary of my body? Which contacts are safe, which are unsafe? What feelings arise inside me when somebody gets close, were I to wish such presence or not? How do I act? What does my culture say about this?
3. **Temporal Territory** — Do I have time? Do I have time free? How do I use my chronological time in relation to the internal time that I need? Does working for somebody mean having time free?
4. **Private Territory** — How is my space of thought? Can I have my own thoughts? Do I have the right to have my secrets? Am I entitled to a personal opinion?
5. **Action Territory - Space of Competence** — Do I feel good about what I do? Do I have space to act, to expand, to get into the dance?

¹¹⁰ Deleuze e Guattari, *Mil Platôs vol. 1,3,4* Ed. 34, São Paulo, 1995,96,97.

⁴⁴ Bakker, C. B., *No Trespassing! Explorations in Human Territoriality*, Chandler & Sharp, Novato, USA, 1973.

6. **Co-territories** — How do I share my space with others? For example: living together, sleeping together, working together, sharing secrets etc.

6c. Rhythm and contact

Environments and rhythms create affects; an affect is “something” that flows from one being to the other. This “something” can only be defined as a sensation. It is an indeterminate region of non-distinction, a moment that precedes natural differentiation.

A good therapist is one who creates unknown or not-yet-known affects, and makes them come to light as the becoming of the ‘Unthought Known’¹¹¹; or as Christopher Bollas puts it: “Because of a cumulative recipient, for example, of the various projective identifications of the person in analysis, meaning that *I know ‘something’ about the patient*, without this having been sufficiently processed at the mental level through my own internal cognitions, reflections and possible interpretations”¹¹².

Some patients create “points” or “bridges” of somatic identification, enabling the therapist to establish himself in this for a period of time, while other patients keep a strict affective distance, which results in an impoverished therapeutic relationship and reduces the therapist’s ability to be and feel.

Thus, to show the forces captured in somebody’s inside and which are beyond the limits of representation, means to open and recognize the possibility of signification.

The art of therapeutic work maybe goes beyond all meaning, and one may say that a “cure” is beyond consciousness, when it is possible to see

¹¹¹ Bollas, Christopher, *The Shadow of the Object: Psychoanalysis of the Unthought Known*, Columbia University Press, NY, USA, 1987.

¹¹² As above.

through the abyss that opens itself in the rock, in a work of expansion and of contraction: the 'pulsation'.

These invisible forces are always potentials of a future. When actualised or made visible, they risk being kept frozen on the material surface of the body, or keep a hysteric pattern on this same surface, such as in a painting for example; but they are not able to be the same as music or movement.

The condition of sensation, the condition of difference, is to impose movement, and the one who imposes is the figure, who puts the forces on what is sensed and never repeats him/herself. The figure becomes one of the routes to self-expression, a way that comes from imagination through the affects, lending more energy and vivacity to thoughts and/or giving beauty and grace to the phrase.

In the words of Silvio Ferraz¹¹³: “How does Deleuze distinguish painting from music, since painting is a repetition, a cliché? That means that the difference is narrowed and transforms itself into a representation, into a white wall, superficial and interpretative. So, what lies in the music, the vibration, the dance it provokes?”

Here we are speaking not only about the music that is heard, but also about the music that is felt, that exists in the relation between the outside and the inside, that creates sensations. Sensations which we may have or which may arise. The music that is not made present is the music of the past, lost in an invisible world, but which may be made present at any moment. The music may remain in the past if it is tied to a visible or invisible painting, fixed in a mimetic image.⁴⁵

¹¹³ Professor of Communication and Semiotics at Universidade Católica, São Paulo, Brasil.

⁴⁵ Class in the course of “Communication Fundamentals; Subject: Concrete Semiotic — the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze”; PUCSP, 2001.

As Ferraz puts it, the strength of space is great, there are always attractions around, which at any moment may generate a resonant vibration, overwhelming the painting, the image of the past as a visible representation on the surface, a painting that may stagnate on this same surface, or, if the counter-scene, the counter-form, the counter-vibration or the counter-dance helps, the music that permeates the relationship will always move in the direction of the future.

Music helps in finding past memories lost in the Bergson¹¹⁴ cone, lost in time. To search the memory that acts unconsciously — or without consciousness — on the present, paralysing it or giving just one alternative for action, repressing every possibility of difference, is to aim towards updating and head for a new and different future.

Deleuze says that “music begins where painting ends”. This assertion resides in the fact that music frees the body from its inertia, gives movement to the body, always one step ahead, providing the body with present-becoming and freeing it from the imperceptible-becoming. There may be a child-becoming, a woman-becoming, a man-becoming, an other-becoming.

Not every person or thing is able to interact with vibration, not every person is able to hear or feel it; sometimes an entire training process is necessary to recognize and make room for an unknown subject. Painting, appearance, representation is always there, avoiding and frustrating a deeper vision of vibration. “When I understand such a facial expression, it is because my face marries it and melts with that which animates it”¹¹⁵(José Gil, 1997).

6d. Soma and knowledge

An important element of this unknown is somatic knowledge. In our work we experience patients in our soma. In the most obvious sense, some patients enable us to feel somatically in a slow, gradual and receptive way,

¹¹⁴ Bergson, Henry, *Matter and Memory*, Zone Books, NY, USA, 1990.

¹¹⁵ Gil, José, *Metarmofoses do Corpo*, Ed. Relógio D'Água, Lisboa, Portugal, 1997.

while others send us complex corporal tensions, which harden us and to which we pay little attention. We somatically record the sensation of the person, carrying its affect in our body, and this constitutes a form of somatic knowledge, which is felt but not thought (Christopher Bollas, 1987).

In the preface to the book “This is Thou”, by Joseph Campbell⁴⁶, Eugene Kennedy tells us that Campbell likes to ask the same question that Schopenhauer used to ask in his essay “On the Basis of Morality”⁴⁷: “How is it possible that a suffering that is not even mine and that does not interest me, affects me in such a sudden way as if it were mine, and with such intensity that it impels me to action...? This is something that is extremely mysterious, something that reason cannot explain and for which we cannot find any base in our practical experience [...].

In front of our eyes we find, each and every day, examples of instantaneous reactions of this kind, without reflection; one person helps another, comes to his aid, sometimes putting his own life in danger for someone he sees for the first time...”

For the German philosopher, identification with someone other than himself means the other is perceived as a person “in who I suffer, in spite of the fact that his skin doesn’t envelop my nerves”.⁴⁸ This book was written in 1895-98, a time when what we knew about neurology was far from our present knowledge. We can see how close this reflection is to Spinoza’s reference to resonance and, consequently, to Bollas’ reference to the unthought known.

⁴⁶ Campbell, Joseph, *Isto é Tu*, Landy, São Paulo, 2002.

⁴⁷ Schopenhauer, Arthur, *Sobre o fundamento da moral*, Martins Fontes Publisher, São Paulo, Brazil, 2001.

⁴⁸ As above.

6e. Differentiation, meaning and sense

In the example given by Gilberto Safra when he visited an orphanage with the tree baby reactions with different responses to the visitor remind me that:

In these pre-conditions of meaning we may speak of an “almost-subject” and an “almost-object”, of the proto-potentiality of the subject and the potentiality of the object. Before we put a tensive subject in front of an investment in the object, it is worth imagining a “presentment” in which we find a bind intimately linking one to the other, subject to world and world to subject.⁵²

Differentiation and meaning, proceeds from successive states, from the undifferentiated continuum to the un-continuum, with possible regressions which characterize aesthetic emotion.

The core of feeling is articulated from three dimensions: affective, corporeal and inter-subjective. For Stern, the meaning of the self is the construction of character subjectivation. As Violi said ¹¹⁶ during one of her seminars in Bologna: we speak here of the sense of self, so it has been presupposed that we are within the realm of the senses. This being so, we have semiotic feeling and activity, from the moment we are born, for the adult before the new born. We can say that feeling starts with the sense of one's self. That, in the first instance, is the sense of one's own body and of the relationship.

The new-born baby lives the experience of a process which will take it to organization. During each formative phase of relating, the arena of interpersonal action in which the questions are answered will shift depending upon the 'I' and the other being sensed as different entities. In the same way,

⁵² Fontanille, Jacques and Greimas, Algirdas, *Semiotique de Passions*, Ed. de Seuil Publishers, Paris, 1991.(p.17).

¹¹⁶ Violi, Patrizia, *Semiotic and Communication*, Unibo, Bologna, Italia, 2007.

different forms of the same question along the course of life are developed in succession: for example, the *physical* intimacy during *nuclear* relating, the *subjective* (empathetic) intimacy during *inter-subjective* relating, and the intimacy of *shared meanings* during *verbal* relating.

The British school of object relations and H.S. Sullivan, were the only ones amongst the treatment theorists to believe that the social human relationship is present from birth, that it exists in itself, that it has a definable nature and that it does not depend upon states of physiological need. (Balint, 1937; Guntrip, 1971).

All these clinical theories agree on one thing: babies possess a very active subjective life, full of mutual passions and confusions, and that they experience non-differentiation in the struggle with indistinct social events, which can be seen as disconnected and disintegrated.

Tronick, in his article: "Meaning Making, Open Systems and Pleasure"¹¹⁷ reports that he created an experiment to disrupt meaning making in infants, children and adults: the face-to-face Still-Face paradigm. The Still-Face in his words precludes a dyadic state of consciousness. In the experiment with young infants, they ask the mother to 'freeze'; while *en face* with her infant the mother should refrain from talking or gesturing. The (in)action of the mother precludes the formation of a dyadic state of consciousness, because there is no exchange of meaningful affect and action with the infant and there is no creation of meaning. In fact, the infants are forced to make meaning with their own self-organizing abilities, which they can keep for a while, but as they are not mature enough they quickly fail.

"Initially the infants act to re-instate their exchange of meaning by smiling at and gesturing to their mothers. But with the mother's ongoing lack of response, the infants disengage, look away, become sad and engage in

¹¹⁷ PDF article on internet: to appear in: Peggy Cooper Davis & Elizabeth Cooper Davis, eds., *Essays for Pleasure: Artists and Scholars Respond to Carol Gilligan's Map of Love*. Enactments Series of Seagull Books London Limited!

self-organized regulatory behaviours such as thumb sucking to maintain their coherence and complexity and to avoid dissipation of the complexity of their state of consciousness.”¹¹⁸

The phase in which the differentiation of feeling starts or exists, proceeds from a state that follows on from a constant that is undifferentiated from the non-constant, with possible regressions which characterize the aesthetic emotion.

For Stern, the sense of self precedes language and self-consciousness, a pre-linguistic feeling, but already clearly semiotic. For example, we can think about the following elements as pre-linguistic ‘sense’.

- the sense of being a subjective agent
- the sense of physical cohesion
- the sense of continuity
- the sense of affectivity
- the sense of one’s own intentionality
- the sense of an inter-subjective self
- the sense of the potency to communicate

As a precondition of signification there exists an undifferentiated flow of continuity, pre-categorizing order, where subject and object are indistinct, but intrinsically united. The cores of feeling are articulated in three dimensions: ‘affective, corporeal and inter-subjective’. In this manner, we can say that the sense of oneself is, in the first place, a sense of one’s own body and relation. It is presumed that there exists a differentiation or pre-differentiation since the beginning as a condition for which meaning is given and that semiose exists.

For Stern, the experiences always gave him the interior of a difference. From their process of development, babies create an experience which will take them to “organization”. This experimental process will continue in their

¹¹⁸ Stern, Daniel, *O Mundo Interpesoal do Bebê*, pag. 8, Ed.Artes Médicas, Brazil, 1992.

development; for example, when they learn to write, they will develop a 'writing-sense' and in puberty, they will develop a 'puberty-sense' and so on, as the psychoanalyst Felix Guattari wrote in his book 'Caosmose'.¹¹⁹

This first way of organizing feeling is basically corporeal, as we can see from examples on film and in stills and research into corporeal psychotherapy, and where, in the next chapter, through examples from a number of writers in psychotherapy, I shall show how the organization of feeling will also give form to the body.

The body with its states:

1. sensory or ectodermic affection
2. motor or mesodermal affection
3. emotional or endodermic affection

All formally brought together, a vital affection with memory and recollection of the life experience is a recondition for the formation of sense. Through the work 'Embryology and Psychotherapy' by David Boadella,¹²⁰ we can see how each corporeal condition can be, for itself alone, a reference of feeling in development, and that semiotically we can define it as a categorization of action that is modified depending upon the specific behaviours of education and development.

¹¹⁹ Guattari, Felix, *Caosmose*, Ed. 34, pág.155, São Paulo, Brazil.

¹²⁰ Boadella, David, *Energy and Character*, Abbotsbury Publications, England 1970/2003 volumes: 2/1, 14/1, 25/1, 28/1, 29/1, 30/1.

7. Embriology, psychotherapy and meaning

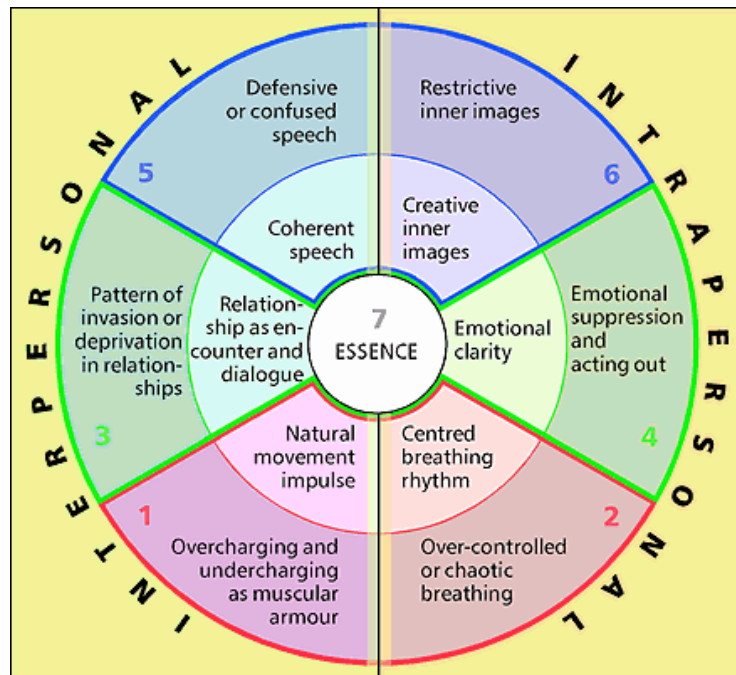
We can see how Boadella places development beginning with embryology and psychotherapy:

Grounding, Centring and Facing are three concepts in Biosynthesis Somatic Psychotherapy, which relate to the communication and resonance between people or between people and nature. Depending upon the relationship with the stages of human development, certain characteristics which will affect the character will be generated and, consequently, in communication. Biosynthesis is a complex form of somatic psychotherapy which includes aspects of prenatal and perinatal corporeal and transpersonal psychology and which has been developed over the last 40 years by David Boadella.

The word 'Biosynthesis' joins together two others: bio, which means life, and synthesis, as a meeting of concrete elements and/or abstracts as one. In life, therefore, it has a multi-dimensional perspective on the person, incorporating different fields of experiences and expressions. These fields are expressed in two different ways; a closed system, or an open system in a person. Closed systems lead to problems with character, physical inhibitions and a reduction in the quality of the spiritual life. Open systems reflect psychic contact, energetic vitality and a connection with the properties of the heart.

Before we go on with our reading, it is here worth further clarifying part of the theory of Biosynthesis, through Boadella's 'life lines' diagrams and his 'structural model'.

The fields of life, presented in the diagram below, take us through the seven basic areas of work involved in therapeutic communication and the different types of functions in communication:



In each one of the six external segments of the diagram, Boadella¹²¹ describes a field of life¹²². The closed position is the outside part of the circle, and the open position is in the middle circle which is close to what represents the essence of the individual. The art of Biosynthesis lies in passing through the more accessible inhibitions of the external surface, arriving at the internal circle where a greater flow between the segments close to the centre is found, thus resulting in seven different areas of work:

1. Motor-affection work with muscular toning and movement;
2. Energetic work with internal and external breathing rhythms;
3. Systematic work on behaviour in relationships.
4. Psycho-energetic work in securing and relaxing emotions.
5. Psycho-dynamic work with speech, benefiting communication problems.
6. Transforming work on restrictive ideas and images which limit our vision.
7. Transpersonal development at the centre of the diagram with somatic meditation linked to the heart's 'voice'.

¹²¹ Boadella, David, *on leaflet of the International Institute of Biosynthesis*, Heiden, Suíça, 2001.

¹²² www.biosynthesis.org/html/e_life_fields.html

With polarity being a central concept in biosynthesis, what is good for one person may hurt another, and the oscillatory movement of the means should form rhythms of communication which can be observed in the following way:

- a. Internal work x External work (experience and expression)
- b. Rise or fall of energy levels (standing or lying down, easy or hard)
- c. Interaction of verbal and non-verbal communication.

In a series of articles on “Organic Systems and Lifestyles” from the perspective of embryology and corporeal organization, David Boadella also developed the understanding that the processes of body armouring or deviations from communication can lead to a lack of balance or an excess of balance in different organic systems in the body.

‘Balance’ here should be understood as a polar swing between extremes; for example, people with bipolar disturbances of mania and depression, signifying a lack of balance and consequent affection or mania or depression, or an excess of balance in people with high levels of anxiety, and we can think of people with extreme corporeal muscular rigidity and loss of flexibility, or at the other extreme, people with extreme characteristics of flabbiness and who also have a consequent loss of flexibility.

In terms of embryology, we can think in psychosomatic forms of existence: mesodermal, endodermic or ectodermic, which are the initial layers forming the human embryo, as explained in detail below. But putting it simply, one can speak of a visceral experience, a cerebral experience or an experience of the spinal column, depending upon what is more comfortable for the people: the body’s internal sensations, ideas and images or motor activity by means of the spine and limbs.

The importance of this understanding, in the first instance, will allow the undertaking of diagnosis by means of corporeal readings and their historical meanings. In the second instance, we develop at least three entrance ways to the unconscious using not only the associated word, as in psychoanalysis,

attributing a function to the concepts: the visceral experience or that of the gastro-intestinal tube and lungs, formed out of the endoderm, takes us to the functions of breathing and emotion which are the most internalized and central of the organism's activities.

These systems of organs generate the energy to keep life going. For a person to keep "centred" or "in a state of centring", it is necessary that they make themselves conscious of their breathing and the peristaltic movements of their innards, which are the functions and structures responsible for the intense energy processes of the body and its metabolic systems.

The therapist will therefore have the opportunity, through interventions in breathing, or directly, with touches to the stomach, to stimulate the emotional regulation or connect to it with other possibilities of communication, such as movement or cognition.

The cardiovascular and skeletal-muscular systems are derived from the mesodermic layer, which is responsible for the levels of pressure of the fluids in the organism, for the degree of muscular tension or relaxation and for the rhythmic action of the heart pumping blood according to the body's needs.

The work in which there is influence exercised over musculature, in order to improve the tone and the movement in its relation to the ground, is a process called "grounding" or "state of equilibrium", which acts on the functions and structures related to behaviour, to movement and to motor expression.

Here therefore, the therapist may access the unconscious or the non-conscious through movement, through touches to the musculature itself which can develop hyper or hypotonic characteristics, which mean a great deal or very little amount of energy, as well as charging the history and quality of motor fields created by somatic posture in relation to past situations.

The skin, the sensory organs and the entire nervous system centred on the brain, govern the system of perception, the flow of information which enters and leaves the body. The sensory system is the base of perception; without sensation, we do not perceive.

The encouragement of becoming sensorially aware, developing eye contact and the ways we have of meeting each other come about in the face and are called “facing” or the “state of perception”, which acts upon the functions and structures occupied with the perception of the world and the processing of information.

In this function, the therapist may work at skin level, so to speak, which may become hyper- or hipo-sensitive to touch, as in the somatization of skin for example. Or it may work with images at the sensory level and with their influences on posture, thought formation and the quality of collecting and communicating information, as much a part of the therapeutic relationship as in the day-to-day.

These three great divisions – vegetative, sensory and motor – have everything to do with communication, as we can recognize in the therapeutic experience in Biosynthesis, where there is an enormous advantage in understanding and where the possibilities of constructing ties can be explored, maintaining and developing it, be it individually or in a group, and one does not become a prisoner of simply verbal and interpretative communication, as happens in psychoanalysis.

A brief history of embryology formation is necessary at this point, understanding this formation and its connections with psychoanalytic concepts.

The ectoderm and the endoderm are formed on the two sides of the embryonic disc. The ectoderm starts to develop first, with the doubling of the rear part of the embryo, which forms the start of the neural canal. The ectodermic systems will therefore be the most primitive in order of importance

during development. The tissues of the mesoderm are the last to be formed in the sequence. In the intra-uterine life the system formed from the endoderm remains asleep because the foetus inside the uterus is fed by means of the umbilicus, and it does not feed or breathe. Therefore, we can see that the nervous system and musculature are formed and become active before the innards.

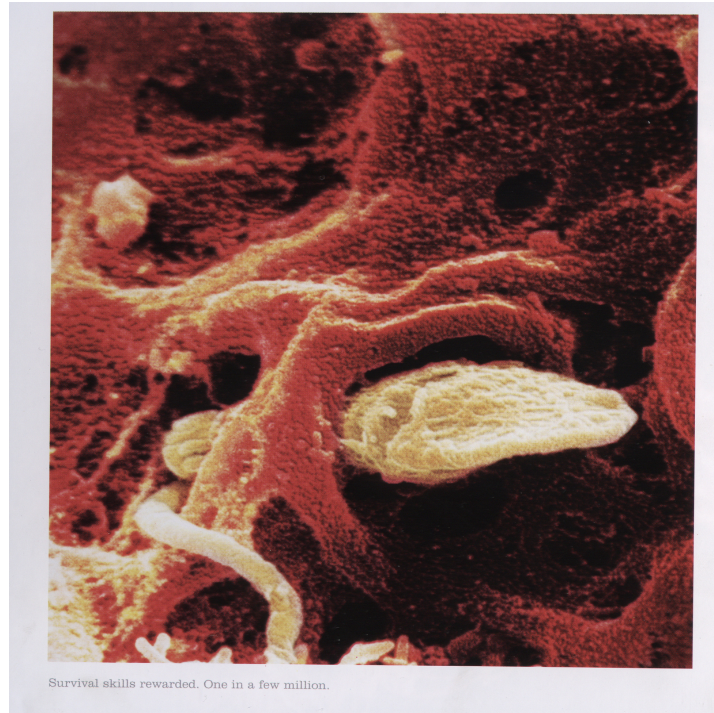
7a. "Flow of the souls"

contact, contagion, multiplication of forces

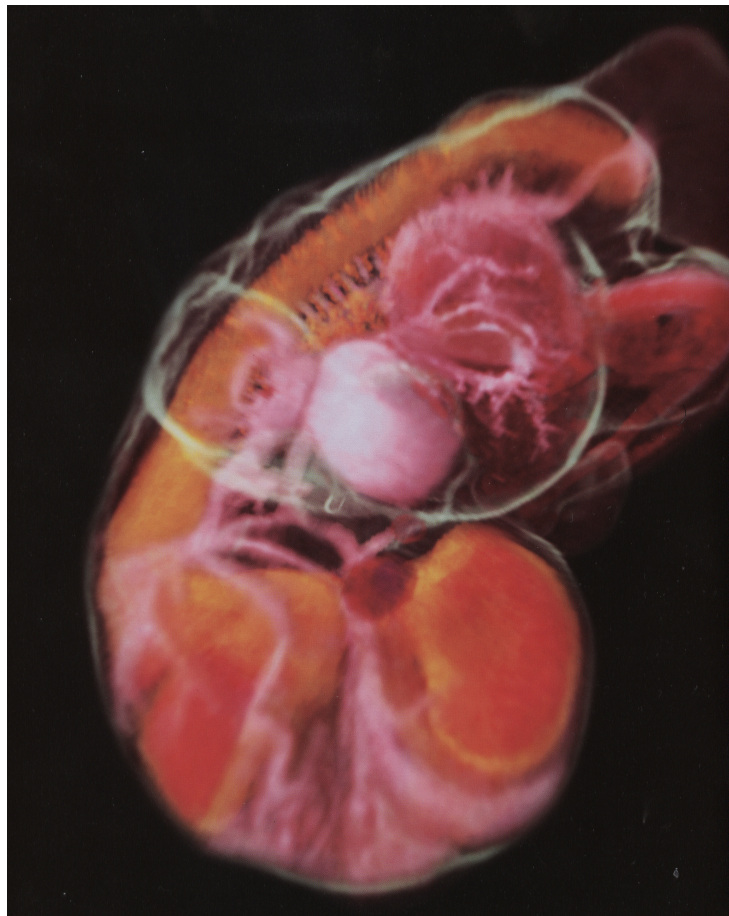


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¹²³ Tsiaras, Alexander, *From Conception to Birth*, Double Day, 2002, pág. 38



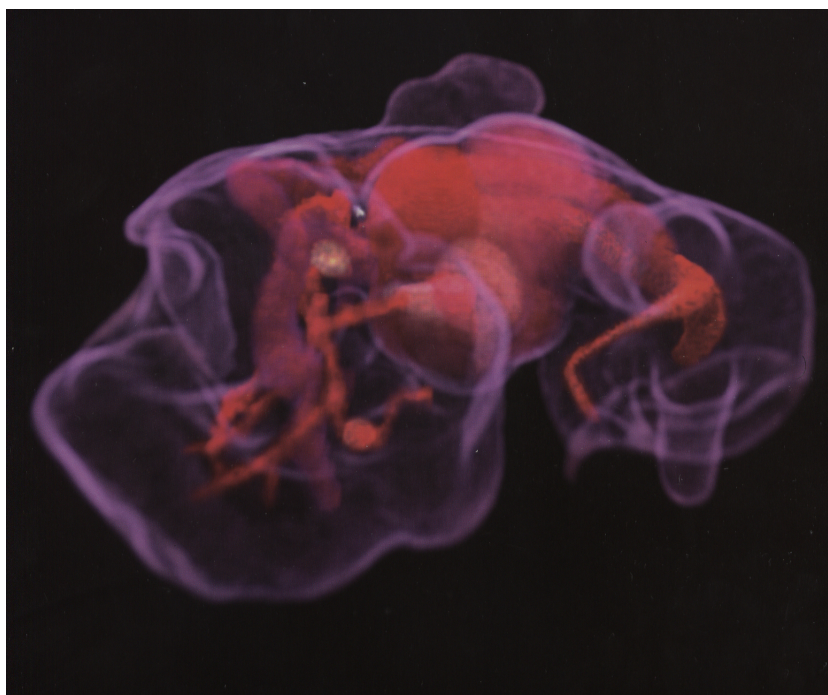
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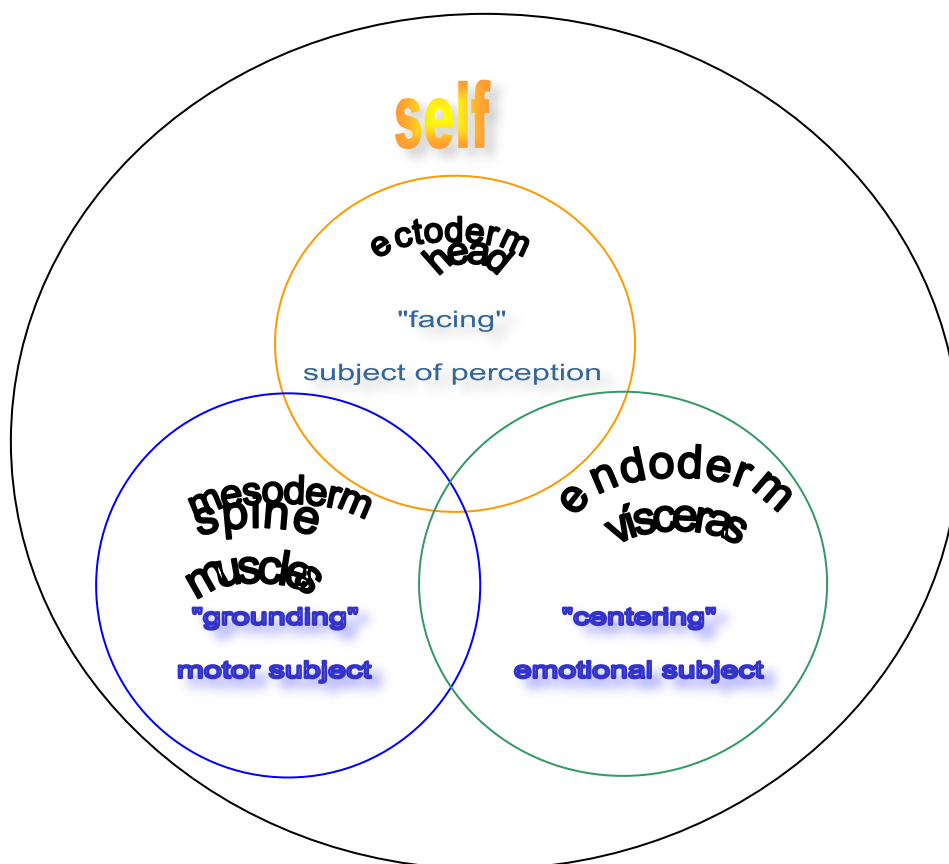
¹²⁴ Tsiaras, Alexander, *From Conception to Birth*, Double Day, 2002, pág. 39, survivor sperm, penetrates the uterus.

¹²⁵ heart pumps life (mesoderm)



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7b. Grounding, Centring, Facing



¹²⁶ Tsiaras, Alexander, *From Conception to Birth*, Double Day, 2002, pág. 39, skin enveloping (ectoderm)

Grounding means being related to the ground, fixed and immobile or, in the intra-uterine life, with the amniotic liquid at the start, afterwards with the smooth walls of the uterus and later of birth, with different “floors”, such as the mother’s body, the mother’s arms, the mother’s look and eyes, the smell, the heat or coolness which we can feel.

The ground is normally conceived of as physical, as the planet, which exercises a gravitational pull on us all, forcing us and applying anti-gravitational forces so that we can move. The body of a lover can also be the *grounding* of the other, in the act of making love.

This movement or dance in relation to the force of gravity helps us understand grounding, but just as the ground can differ, so our centre of gravity can also be multiplied. Through the centre of gravity, we understand the place where the action takes place. As well as the physical ground, we also have “psychic grounds” which exert a gravitational force, games of identification and dis-identification with thoughts, relations and emotions - all are examples of *grounding*.

As we develop ourselves, we learn to communicate with the “groundless ground” of our existence, the void. As such, we have multiple grounds, multiple realities to which we relate, but as a common denominator, grounding describes our means of accessing and constructing realities, truths, beliefs, life management strategies and levels adapted to assertion and external territories, removing the boundaries from one’s self in the direction of the other.

Centring means being related to our centre. The physical centre is our biological nucleus and the metabolic processing of nutrition which provides us with energy. As such, it is related to our sensations, feelings and emotions directed towards external forces, allowing us to always be ready to take action: we open and assimilate the contact, or we close down for protection.

Once again this biological language serves for us to understand centring on a social and psychic level, dealing with personal values and identities, or in other words, the opportunity to study our true selves at a social and psychic level.

Centring is important for people with intra-personal or inter-personal relationship difficulties, for example breathing is always a form of relationship between the interior and the exterior, and someone who breathes very little may have little power in communicating himself, whilst a person who breathes excessively may always be communicating in an anxious manner.

As all the forms of centring are implied in affection which communicates signals of intention to guide us, for the agency, the centring is in contact with our subjective world, our truths and our beliefs, the “ground” of our ethics. Removing one’s own boundaries in relation to the other and having the boundaries removed from oneself.

Facing is related to contact experience. The face, the ‘rosticidade’¹²⁷, shows, by symbolic extension, the interior world, perceiving the exterior world as well as revealing the interior world simultaneously. The face really is the threshold between the self and the world.

Can we look at and feel what we perceive and experience externally and internally? The face becomes communicator and mirror; facing would therefore be our ability to be where we are and how we are. We need a face to be human beings, and losing the face would mean dehumanization.

Facing exposes me to existence, to the other in me and me in the other. As such, facing has to do with contact and with the paths we are

¹²⁷ in Gil, José, *Metarmofoses do Corpo*, , Ed. Relógio D’Água, Lisboa, Portugal, 1997. Rosticidade is a Portuguese word that is difficult to translate, but we could say for example our “rosticidade” is how we look (our whole body as a face) from a sensitive inner and external perspective.

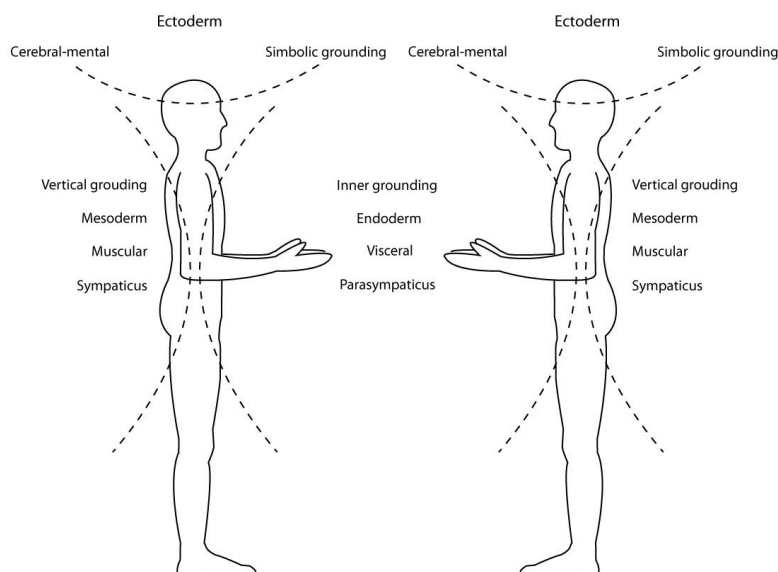
tracing, enabling the existence of vanishing lines. It has to do with the ability to be able to be in contact with both interior and exterior territories.

The three modalities mentioned above: perception, emotion and movement, are, in principle, to be found in a certain dynamic counterbalance within a person, but are constantly exposed to external forces and attractions which are placed in homeostatic imbalance, and which may lead to harmful pathologies in communication.

We can describe some of these forms of fluctuation, which carry the divergences from communication, if there are excesses or pathological and rigid deficits in the manifestations of these principles.

This can be seen, for example, in a family where there is a constant incentive for the development of rationality and the children may develop an extremely rational form of behaviour, in detriment to the emotional and movement related parts; another family may stimulate emotional behaviour to the detriment of thinking and movement; and yet another type of family may value the corporeal aesthetic very highly, to the detriment of perception and emotion. Each one will bring consequences to the subjective level just as much as to the somatic level.

Structural model of Boadella: the 3 embriological layers



7c. Breathing's rhythm and communication

In the clinical practice of Biosynthesis, we can see breathing as an essential indicator of that which is happening with the patient and with the expression of his emotional state. The emotional rebalance is directly linked to the rebalance of breathing, to such an extent that the two form an inseparable function. For example, a person in a state of depression breathes very little and keeps himself in a state of corporeal and psychic lethargy, which normally alienates him from contact with the world.

The respiratory rhythm, when it is relaxed, gives us a sensation of concentration and centredness, showing that the person is indeed connected with himself. Taking the example of a person floating in water, his weight is distributed from his centre of gravity, located below the navel. If he becomes anxious, breaking the respiratory rhythm, a contraction is created and the person sinks because he has lost his connection with his centre.

Respiration functions with the rhythm of breathing in and breathing out, waves which rise and fall in the abdomen and the chest. Breathing in we fill, contain and prepare ourselves for action; breathing out we empty, free and surrender ourselves. Depending upon the way in which a person breathes, he has a rhythm of interior well-being or demonstrates tension and a lack of tranquillity. If a degree of super-retention exists, the senses are restrained, with a fear of breathing out and losing control or even breathing the dying breath, in compensation for the good sensation of going beyond the limits and gaining more spontaneity. A person who has a tendency to breathe in also tends toward rigidity and high pressure.

Boadella cites the example of a man who, when he was a child, was often beaten by his mother, and who tried to win her love by acting in a way which would make her happy. However his mother always found fault in him that was serious to her and as a result beat him with an electric cable. He learnt karate and rose to a high level in the martial art, giving him the

possibility to unload an enormous amount physically, but he continued feeling pains in his chest and anxiousness which he still related to anger that he felt from his childhood. This physical tension connected to his childhood history also causes a type of behaviour and communication with the outside world which always turned into a high state of tension. This person needed help in relaxing the chest and with his breathing.

Another type of personality is identified with breathing out even more. These are people who develop an enormous difficulty in restraining themselves and breathing out comes accompanied by a cry or other emotional expression. People in this state easily lose their sense of concentration. For them, learning to breathe and create a sense of concentration would mean a new way of communicating with themselves and with others.

Breathing presents other, more complex, characteristics as well, which, in the body, appear as chest or stomach based breathing and their variations, each one of them bringing different characteristics related to communication. As a common example, we could remember the military orders to inflate the chest and keep it so with a bodily expression of strength and respect, giving that impression of a ball of air, and which, when breathing in, almost lifted the feet off the ground.

This appearance is further adopted by many men as a symbol of strength and especially of not backing down, or not giving in to the “enemy”, but ends up as not backing down to themselves. Soldiers, in order to relax, need war and other powerful confrontations as their only outlet for a greater tension.

We can easily see this in the executive, business and political worlds today; cinema, especially that from North-America and the action genre, is based upon this principle of taking the public to a high state of tension so that only then are they able to relax.

Another symbol is that of the totally deflated and withered chest, with a “relaxation”, but which carries a great weakness, languidness or even depression. This state is often found in society in those who present a certain air of weakness or melancholy, and who move along whilst dragging this with them. In sexuality, these forms of breathing evidently affect the quality and rhythm of the encounter and its emotional state. Breathing is one of the fundamental aspects in the sexual dance.

When Wilhelm Reich¹²⁸ discovered the fundamental role of breathing, he described it as an entry into the vegetative/productive world, taking him to the investigation of the hidden domains of the body’s interior; the pulse and heart beats, discovering that whenever there were chronic breathing problems, the disturbances were found in these internal rhythms which blocked the body’s pleasure rhythms.

If a person has chronic breathing tendencies, their way of communicating themselves to the world will have its own characteristics and different forms of dialogue.

One of my patients suffered from extreme sensations of panic, fear of vomiting and great anxiety in the stomach. When this patient lay down on the couch, her breathing was redistributed throughout the body and the anxiety was transformed into waves of pleasure. But this patient’s natural behaviour was to turn into herself; her sensations and feelings were kept to herself, and she could not manage to share them or transform them into something pleasurable, they simply continued swimming around inside her.

She had a great need for contact, but the “breathing” kept her a prisoner, that is, the breathing was the pattern by which her body had learned to communicate and deal with social interaction. She had learned to use her

¹²⁸ Reich, Wilhelm, *The Function of the Orgasm*, Farrar, Atrous and Giroux, New York, NY, USA, 1968.

arms and legs as a means of communication with the outside world, to get out of herself, to protect herself, to take hold, to withdraw, to open and close. With work, her breathing was freed up and she reached better levels of communication and, consequently, pleasure.

An intensity of energy coming from the innards or from the deep insides of the body may be shifted to the motor system whereby a physical expression takes place through motor movement, touch, speech or visual contact. Here, we can also think about the difference between expression and communication. Emotional expression may take place anywhere with a person who is alone and who is expressing himself, as a means of liberation, showing how he is feeling. This is not communication however, as this depends upon someone or something with which to share it, upon a reply which somehow validates the interaction. The constant behaviour of a child in expressing himself without any sort of return can take him to a state of despair and incapacity, and this is down to the lack of reply and confirmation.

7d. Uneasiness and breathing

According to David Boadella, in his book *Life Streams*, it would appear that during psychoanalysis, Freud chose to sit behind his patients during sessions because he felt embarrassed by direct visual contact, despite listening to his patients receptively and precisely.

“Facing” is related to the quality of visual contact. Reich faced his patients and worked with what he saw in them: muscular armour, vegetative currents and respiratory blockages. He used to face his patients and imitate them, showing the corporeal defences, the facial expressions and the voice at a level of provocation which was enough for the patient to be affected at the muscular and respiratory levels.

Boadella further presents the relationship with one of Reich's patients who had already had many sessions in which they had worked with the emotional expression of his eyes:

“After a few weeks, he emerged. During the session, he suddenly appeared and touched the therapist (Reich), who cried out with excitement and satisfaction: That’s it! The patient looked at him strangely and cynically, with his eyes and head turned to him, as if he were saying “What? Have you taken leave of yourself again?” But the therapist did not waver and continued pointing into the patient’s eyes, saying that that was where he was, until the patient started to feel it. There was a fleeting brilliance, connected to the movement of his head and eyes, bringing a new expression to his tone, coming from the depths of his eyes, capturing the eyes and the therapist’s being. It was a flirting glance, a call, like a blink; the eyelids, the eyelashes and the forehead were raised, the eyes moved to one side and, at the same time, the head suggestively moved to the other. Due to the degree to which the therapist imitated this expression, the patient started to maintain better contact with it, his whole face participated, at first blushing with embarrassment, until he exploded with a hearty laugh. The therapist had touched upon the patient’s secret and “understood”!

“It was a meeting of minds and emotions. Words were unnecessary. After a little while, the patient brought the other impulses, which had remained hidden, to his tone. He let out cries of joy and whistled. And so, speech came. With a meaningful smile, and then with hiccups and shivers, he remembered his frustrated attempts at flirtation during his adolescence, his ardent desire to attract the girls with this imprisoned and repressed by his moral education and his fear of being discovered and punished.”¹²⁹

José Gil says of Fernando Pessoa¹³⁰: “If uneasiness is the movement which prepares and coordinates that which is to come, there is no movement

¹²⁹ Gold, Philip em Boadella, David, *Correntes da Vida*, Ed. Summus, SP, 1992, page101.

¹³⁰ Gil, José, *Fernando Pessoa ou a Metafísica das Sensações*, Ed. Relógio D’Água, Lisbon, Portugal, no date.

in the stagnation; the stagnation should deny every possibility of metamorphosis. Without uneasiness, there is no movement, it causes unbalance, and therefore movement, the stagnation is not only denied, but it also denies and ends up obstructing movement, just as the negation of existence leads to a non-being, a non-future to a non-transformation. In his clinic, Reich started with a guarded, stagnating body, and by means of his technique looked for the uneasiness, looking beyond his technique to reach it and find the movement contained in the corporeal trauma.

7e. Towards the search for resonance

The easy way with which we are able to understand the performances of actors shows our fundamental capacity to decipher the intentions, desires or even the beliefs of others simply by observing their movements. The facial expressions or the walk are aspects which, after seeing, we quickly interpret, without effort or special training. This source of information is essential and sometimes enough in our relations and social games. Reich plays a simulation game, an imitation of his patient in the example above, helping him to see himself, by means of a mirror, simulating the point of view of the other and using the result of the simulation to understand and predict his behaviour.

“Quite precisely, the simulacrum is a demonic image, divested of similarity, or, prior, and adversely to the icon, it placed the similarity on the outside and lives through the difference. If it produces an effect outside similarity, it is as an illusion and not as an internal principle; it is constructed on top of a disparity, it has interiorized the dissimilarity of its constituent numbers, the divergence of its points of view, in a way that he shows numerous things and tells various stories at the same time.”¹³¹

Studies of the schemas of the imagination over the last few years appear to definitively confirm that the characteristic of the mental states of

¹³¹ Deleuze, Gilles, *Diferença e Repetição*, Ed. Graal, Rio de Janeiro, 1985, page 130.

others rests upon the same mechanisms which allow us to have the conscience of ourselves.¹³²

Continuing with the report on the patient:

“One day a miracle happened. Suddenly, the patient seemed shocked and opened his eyes in fright. While he looked at the therapist, his face softened and filled with light. The patient soon realized that his eyes had been opened to excitement and ‘orgonic’ enlightenment¹³³ and that he was now able to see better and, because of this, his own energetic excitement could be touched by the energetic excitement of others.... The significance of this for future generations is enormous, as the majority of people do not truly see due to their armour. They lose the brightness of life, and therefore their poetry, music and beauty. The patient had improved his vision....”

The patient established his boundaries, he became a territory, the vision met the eye which in turn met the vision which met a space, a place inside itself, territory staked out starting with both virtual and real unease, provocation and confrontation. The exchange of looks between the therapist and patient opened the communication, and if it had not been for the therapist’s desire to go beyond the skin, further than the eye, trying to penetrate into the invisible, where he found this intensity which was presented in the look, in vision, transforming representation, the meeting and the meaning would not happen.

The soul¹³⁴ occupies its space in regions of the body and the body serves as a multiplicative of the soul, offering it a geographical space. The interior of the body participates immediately, assimilating the intensity of the forces. A white wall and a black hole converse, the surface of inscription and

¹³² Damasio, Antonio, *The Feeling of What Happens*, Harcourt Brace and Company, USA, 1999, page 11.

¹³³ Orgonic – “Orgon” Reichian terminology for energy.

¹³⁴ There are several interpretations for 'soul'; here we use soul as 'life' or 'flow' according with José Gil and David Boadella.

process of subjectivation. In this therapist-patient relationship new signs and subjectivity are produced, removing the boundaries of armour and a consequent territorialization of flow.

When the therapist represents or imitates the patient, contacts, touches or enters into his territory with his own corporeal sign, he creates a de-territorializing rhythm, a game which stresses the pulse between the two mediums, repeating the expression of the patient at the same time that he reflects a simulation revealed in the face, in the skin, in what is invisible and un-lived that may exist to the patient. The mediums build bridges of communication, imitating codes. Like a mother playing with her baby, the imitation serves as a stimulus for communication, but, as Daniel Stern says¹³⁵, the imitation is never perfect, because if it were, it would be simple mimicry without subjectivity.

“The body can take the place of every other context, present (involving the body) or absent (another situation of the body). As such, a tiny variation in the body’s position, or of a gesture, can induce different behaviour in the one who perceives it. Here we enter into the domain of influence and suggestion, and therefore of certain occurrences of contra-transference.”¹³⁶

As such, the invisible forces which put one body into contact with another are always future potentials, which are always ready to bring inter-subjective contents into the present reality when possible, the skin being their means of transport, investing forces and affection from the corporeal unconscious in the direction of awareness.

The future potentials are unforeseeable accidents and the possibility of being brought into the present depends upon the capacity to be receptive to these accidents along the way, because if it were immune to accidents, as at

¹³⁵ Stern, Daniel, M.D, *O mundo Interpessoal do Bebê*, Ed. Artes Médicas, Porto Alegre, 1992, page 125.

¹³⁶ Gil, José, *Metarmofoses do Corpo*, Ed. Relógio D’Água, Portugal, 1997, page 212.

times we really ought to be, at the same time as guaranteeing a return from the past, we are preventing the advance of the future.

The forces are the condition of difference, that is, it is they which will tear apart with repetitive behaviour, and will impose a new “figure” on the body, a process of Biosynthesis called transfiguration. What we could maybe associate with the idea of Figure, which Gilles Deleuze fashions to speak of the painting of Francis Bacon, in order to see that the Figure is not limited to immobility, it is sensitive and exploratory, but when it appears and is isolated, it becomes an icon and between two figures a story is suggested or tends to be suggested as a tendency of movement which is captured in the representation and what is brought into the present in this figure.

In this case, the figure is the character which provides the force¹³⁷ in sensitivity. This force is found in the nerve fusions of muscles¹³⁸ and stimulates the development of the work of “Motor Fields and Postures of the Soul”, as described by David Boadella.

8. Motor Fields

In motor fields, one works with an emotional anatomy in reply to the strong interferences which divert the person from being in contact with their potentials and forces, interferences which lead to the formation of bodily character postures formed by the demands from the outside world.

There is a great difference when movements come from internal stimulus and not from stimulation by another. There are two nervous impulses which standardize our movements; quite simply, the alfa nerve linked to the system of voluntary action, and the gamma nerve linked to the system of alertness which is intentional and concerns the condition of the mind. Voluntary movement, in the majority of cases, due to external interferences, is

¹³⁷ Force here is considered to be a line of communication between two people.

¹³⁸ Musculature here serves as the surface that facilitates and make sensitive forces of connection.

overlapped with spontaneous involuntary movements, and therefore working at a gamma level is a means of contacting the non-conscious or unconscious world without using words.

The concept of motor fields was developed out of studies by Piaget in senso-motor projects. From there, the German embryologist Erich Blechschmidt developed the concept of embryodynamic fields, describing eight types of force fields. Each one of these fields relates to the different stages of communication of the *self* with the external world, and run in accordance with the concepts of Daniel Stern. In the development process, the main motor fields, alone or together, are involved in all the stages of development, from free-floating inside the uterus, through birth and breast-feeding, to crawling, standing up, picking things up and all the later abilities which are necessary for the sensory-motor stability in the affected relationships, each one having a physical-emotional importance which will influence the therapeutic relationship and the posture in relation to life.

9. Process of transformation and invisible forces

It is the process of transformation which deals with the movement of form, of the sign, of the corporeal reading, which is a static representation of one form of being. The invisible forces come from the energy reserves of the corporeal memory, releasing a constant process of transfiguration.

When memories of the past are stimulated, they bring affection which frequently appear as an energy load in the body, and these loads are precursors of unconscious emotional expressions which are compressed in the body.

Neurological studies show that our conscience and thoughts take place out of sensations and information which arise from our body during interactive experiences, as Antonio Damasio clearly defined in his book *The Feeling of What Happens*.

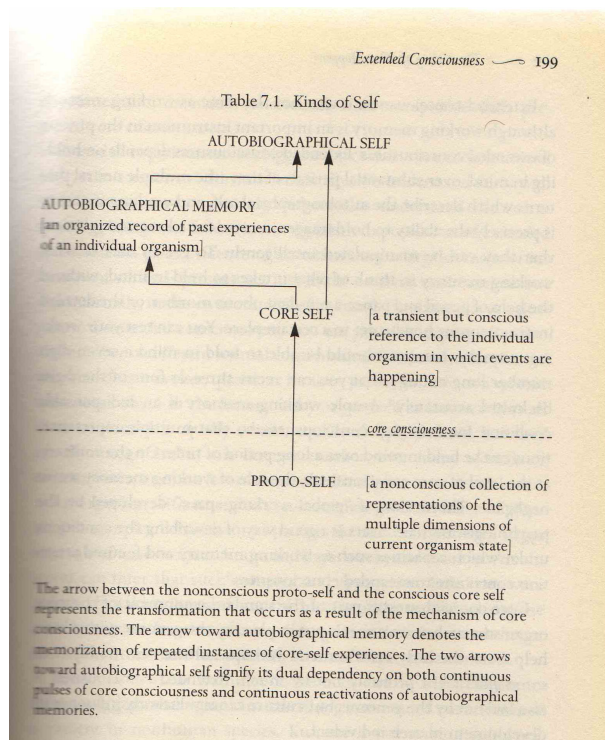
These corporeal experiences are the source of our implicit and explicit memory and make up a record of how we live in the world, whilst also being the basis of how we formulate thoughts and ideas in our interactions. Brain studies show that that which we experience as our “conscience” is based upon and highly driven by memory.

This is the reason the neurologist laureate, Gerald Edelman, calls the conscience “the remembered present” in his book “A Universe of Consciousness”.

Because of this we can think of two classes of memory – autobiographical memory and evolutionary-genetic memory. Our autobiographical memory is a game board lost at birth, but the evolutionary/genetic is what we can call the “passion for existence”. Under this influence we look for the necessities in life for the continuance of existence. With growth, this nature will constantly be pushing us towards actions and interactions directed towards the continuity of the species, as much sexually as socially.

In the following chart, Damásio calls the multiple dimensions of the representations of the state of the organism the ‘*Proto-Self*’. This is the place where the autobiographical memory and the genetic memory are born, being directed to what he calls the central *Self* or the *Core Self*, which reunite the conscious references of the individual’s organism where the events are taking place and forming the autobiographical memory which is the base of the autobiographical *Self*.

Below is a page from Damasio’s book, *The Feeling of What Happens*:



All these interactive social processes are musical processes, where the memory is contained in the symphony of affection and in the therapeutic alliance. Music, the dance between the therapist and patient, starts where representation ceases. Music is brought up to the present through relational rhythm, but inside the body it is always a potential for the future, being more resistant to repetition.

It is clear that here I am speaking of music created and stimulated by the therapist and patient within the room of resonance where the concern will be the non-repetition of a historical pathology, or the non-reproduction of the same record. The figure here enters into the place of representation or the sign, leading to a spilling over of past meaning, creating new possibilities, in the direction of a process of independence.

The invisible forces (contained in the various layers of the body) contain the afflictions of the patient and therapist in the room of resonance:

1. "The unthought known" – vegetative identification – Christopher Bollas
2. "The non-lived unconscious" –D. Winnicott

3. “Somatic Understanding” – somatic identification– Stanley Keleman

In this way, the body is passed over by a set of processes, being multiplied together with the organism and becoming a set of processes that is in constant transformation.

According to Bergson, within the organs there exists a force ready to interact with the world and the tendency of the organism is a means for it to negotiate with the world in certain ways to the point whereby the organs create strategies for negotiation.

The bodily resonance works as a desire to negotiate. Just as in human genetics there already exists a force for the continuity of life, so there already exists a uterus awaiting an embryo, and there already exists a sperm waiting to germinate a uterus. Before life exists, there is already a place waiting for it.

9a. Internal and external grounds as bases for the formation of meaning

Boadella describes the case of a patient who sought therapy because her emotional and sexual lives were confused. The girl had learnt, just as in many other cases, that what was attractive to people was her body and not her inner world and her soul. She maintained good visual contact, despite her confusion and low level of energy.

Boadella worked to increase and improve the energy level through certain corporeal techniques, but he had the feeling that, at a very deep level, she behaved as though she were always invisible and untouchable. He therefore decided to suspend his corporeal work and even stopped looking at the patient; lying beside her, he shared the difficulty he was feeling and which was missing in the attempt to communicate at other levels.

From this moment on, the patient said that she did not believe that there had been a deeper ‘I’ that could be reached and started to talk based

upon her deeper maxims, remembering and acknowledging her past, gradually starting to thaw out her defences, her body armour, speaking out from within without the bodily intervention of the therapist who had become a threatening presence and not an open channel of communication. Her breathing was gradually becoming more relaxed and her body was finding a means for the words to come out.

The *external ground* is the body, made of flesh and blood, blood vessels and nerve cells, an intricate and complex work of art. The *internal ground* is the potential, the force of the individual, uniting or separating us from a domain of previous existence to the formation of the body, not imprisoned by time or space, overcoming barriers and limits.

Dr. Ola Raknes, a follower and student of Reich in Norway, said the following:

“Those who are used to recognizing their own bodily processes are certainly capable of feeling the currents which pass through the entire body during a complete and deep breath. The wavelike movements give a clear sensation of life. Those who keep their bodies relaxed and their minds clear, have these sensations as a regular and permanent background to all that which they experience, and it is this which gives colour, taste and vigour to their lives.”¹³⁹

9b. Body without Organs

Maybe the idea of the “Body without Organs” could help us here; an idea which Deleuze and Guattari took from Antonin Artaud:

“A body without organs is made in such a manner that it can only be occupied, peopled by forces. Only the forces pass through and circulate. But the Body without Organs is not a scene, a place, nor is it a support where something can happen. This is nothing to do with ghosts, there is

¹³⁹ Raknes, Ola em Boadella, David, *Nos Caminhos de Reich*, Ed. Summus, 1985.

nothing to interpret. The Body without Organs facilitates the flow of intensities, producing and distributing in an intensive, not extensive, space. It is not a space nor is it in space; it is material which will occupy the space at this level or that – a level which corresponds to the forces produced [...]. Production of the real as a great power from zero up. This is why we treat the Body without Organs as the 'plain egg' anterior to the extension of the organism and to the organization of the organs, before the formation of the layers [...], as the organs only appear and function here as pure forces.”

When the therapist abandons the focus on the body, the Body without Organs replaces the organism, the organization, the experience finally replaces interpretation, the explanation is no longer necessary, the exploratory work is transformed into a work of “initiation”.

The repressions installed in the muscular memory which controlled and gave a representational character to the “motor subject” are replaced by flows of intensity and the patient can truly become himself; a Body without Organs constructs himself, the “motor subject” is found again brought into the present and sensitive.

The egg appears, it is progressive, as Deleuze says - in it is found pure intensity, the essence, in terms which Boadella defines as the origins of production which were constrained behind the social mask installed in the “subject of perception”.

In this way, the Body without Organs is the exact contemporaneity of the adult, which in his self-modernization is the transformation of this essence - representation becomes real, the difference beyond repetition.

Gerda Boyesen says that once the vegetative currents are re-established in their flows, this signifies the “no turning point”¹⁴⁰, that is, the

¹⁴⁰ Boyesen, Gerda, *Cadernos de Psicologia Biodinâmica*, vol.1, Ed.Summus, 1987.

capacity to seek the difference is established and desire becomes the state of immanence.

10. Sensation and meaning

The psychiatrist Peter Levine¹⁴¹ gives the following example of a patient.

Twenty five years ago Jody's life was in pieces. Walking through a forest in the US, she was approached by a hunter, who, due to mental insanity, beat her in the head a number of times with his rifle. This person sought Peter for therapy in 1985 and her memories of the event were few and confused; she vaguely remembered the meeting with the hunter and the journey to hospital. Jody suffered serious communication problems, as she was very anxious, had difficulty in concentrating and problems with her memory, and suffered from depression and chronic fatigue.

During the treatment she suffered a fall whilst ice-skating, and following this incident a lot of post-traumatic symptoms started to take place. Jody believed that only remembering the facts could cure her, but this was extremely frustrating as she could not manage to remember them.

Peter therefore suggested that she could get better even without having a "cognitive memory" of the facts, which relaxed her somewhat. Focusing his work on the body, he gradually became aware of numerous patterns of tension in the region of the head and neck.

Focusing more on the "Experience of Sensation", she started to recognize an internal kinaesthetic tendency to turn and retract her neck. Allowing this "tendency" to be executed in a gradual and 'slow motion' way, as if it was being done with "micro-movements", she managed to experience a momentary fear followed by a strong sense of pins and needles.

¹⁴¹ Levine, Peter, in *Energy and Character*, vol. 28, 1, 1997.

Allowing these “involuntary intentions” to appear and gradually run their course, Jody started a journey within herself going further than the deep unconscious of the “traces of memory” implicit in the traumatic reality. With this polar movement between flexible control and delivery of these involuntary movements, Jody started to experience a slight shivering sensation in her body.

A number of sessions were held with this procedure of “micro-movements”, allowing her body to enter further and further into contact with her sleeping memory. In this way she was regaining the movements of defence against the attack – her legs moved in order to run, her arms reacted violently against the attacker, the sensation of fighting, the smell of the fight and of the attacker and the blows to the head.

Accomplishing the various forms of reply to the pain and orientation, Jody could construct the feeling of how she (her body) can react in that fraction of a second and gradually restore her broken self.

While the explicit memory can be accessed through cognition in the cerebral cortex, the implicit memory is attained through the body in the limbic system.

The “sense sensation” is made up of synesthesia, proprioception, visceral information and from the orifices providing entry to the body. The information enters the body in a non-conscious way, through the limbic (emotional) or neo-cortical (cognitive) systems.

Intentional, non-conscious movements are experienced as if the body were moving of its own free will, rather than by conscious force. The experience is compared to the “official story”, giving a voice and movement to the story that it was beaten or oppressed.

The patient-therapist removes the boundaries between each other. The force of de-territorializing is not to be confused with the speed of movement or development. The patient, in this case the one with fewer boundaries, has them erected again.

The whole body takes on a new form; a new face arises from what was once essential. The arms, legs, smell, sound re-establish themselves. The power of the therapist, or the power of the therapist within the game, resonating as in the father-daughter relationship, here means the effectiveness of therapeutic communication, organizing a new power, a new psycho-corporal sign.

Psychoanalysis would move toward interpretation, to the meeting with the "I"; we look to take a different path, even, as Deleuze says, to substitute the interpretation for experimentation. The delusion is unveiled, the organism which was signified and objectified by violence, survives the Body without Organs. The delusion forms the armour of the Reichian character which interferes in direct communication, diverting the subject from the target.

Each type with his own diversions; the masochist, the schizoid, the hysteric. Only with forces is it possible to circulate; the work of the therapist is, in the therapeutic relationship, to help to find the forces of this Body without Organs and because of this it is called the "perfect egg", before the organization of the organs, before also the organs which have suffered trauma, damaging the contact with the field of immanence of desire and its substance which is defined as a process of production or creation.

Again Deleuze: "The pleasure is the affection of a person, or a subject is the only means for a person to find himself in the process of desire which spills over; the pleasures, even the most artificial ones, are re-establishing boundaries." Jody's organism takes on meaning and subjectivity once again.

The significance detaches from the body and the organism modernizes another signal, a new posture of the soul.

We can make an analogy between this work and the concepts of Carlos Castañeda, the Tonal and the Nagual. The Tonal linked to organized memory: the trauma organized Jody's organism in a certain way, giving a certain signal to the body, a body's face understandable and able to interpret. With the therapeutic experience, the Body without Organs substitutes this organization through the flow of forces, deconstructing layers, the Nagual.

These negotiations help make new signals visible, marking the difference and lack of difference of repetition, making the figure a possibility rather than the representation. The transformation comes to be the movement of the scene, becomes animal in the sense of accepting the non-conscious movement which comes from the body, as a desire to belong to the other connections and multiplications swimming in a geography of affection.

In the examples of communication and therapeutic experience presented, we have undergone moments in which the perception, motor and emotional "subjects" have been touched upon and the territories of each one affected by the mediums and rhythms imposed by the dual relationship, constructing and deconstructing boundaries, the territory appearing from the expressivity of the rhythm, forming new motor, gestured, optical and emotional ritornellos. Consequently, these new possibilities form new negotiations, intra-negotiations to inter-negotiations, as components of passage and alternation. (page 135, Mil Platos, vol.4).

Section 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BODIE'S SIGN AND ITS MEANINGS

Epigraph

I'm from a good home. A child,
I was like all the rest.
Until, that is, the fate stormed in
and put me to its test

Ones of life's evil moods came on.
It burst within my breast,
then howling like a cyclone,
swept off all I possessed.

It shook me, split me, razed me,
burned without reason or pity - what a pain!
Anguished and alone,

- alone! - my heart raged,

raged in its dark passion,
in howling grief insane...

And of those fiery hours
just these cold ashes remain.

- This handful of cold ashes...¹⁴²

EPÍGRAFE

SOU bem nascido, Menino,
Fui, como os demais, feliz.
Depois, veio o mau destino
E fez de mim o que quis.

Veio o mau gênio da vida,
Rompeu em meu coração,
Levou tudo de vencida,
Rugiu como um furacão,

Turbou, partiu, abateu,
Queimou sem razão nem dó –

Ah, que dor!

Magoado e só,

- Só! – meu coração ardeu:

Ardeu em gritos dementes
Na sua paixão sombria...
E dessas horas ardentes
Ficou essa cinza fria.

- Essa pouca cinza fria..¹⁴³

¹⁴² Slater, Candace, *This Earth, that Sky, poems of Manuel Bandeira*, UCLA Press, USA

¹⁴³ Bandeira, Manuel, *Antologia Poética*, Ed, do autor, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, 1961

A. Different Body Psychotherapy approaches

During the sixties and seventies, after Wilhelm Reich, some neo-reichian psychotherapists and researchers, by studying the development of personality through the body, arrived at some body postures that would somehow serve to define the personalities¹⁴⁴ of people, as raised through their systems of education, in the form of icons. In this chapter I will show what the researchers Alexander Lowen, Stanley Keleman, Gerda Boyesen and David Boadella found and proposed. These researchers can be considered as the most important in the field.

I will start with Alexander Lowen from the United States. Lowen was a student of Wilhelm Reich and his patient between 1940 and 1952, spending the years between 1942 and 1945 in New York City. Lowen became intrigued with the course that made reference to the functional identity of the character of a person with the general pattern of the body attitude or muscle armour. This armour is referred to as a general pattern of chronic muscle tensions of the body, because they protect the individual against painful and frightening emotional experiences. They work as a shield against dangerous impulses coming from within one's own personality as well as against others impulses.

For Lowen, the defences were understood to be a process of development. By means of a diagram he explained the formation of defensive layers as concentric circles:

1. Ego layer;
2. Muscular layer;
3. Emotional layer;
4. Centre layer.

¹⁴⁴ Personality from the word persona, something that one person develop like a mask, character as a protection action the exterior world, and becomes the way the person is perceived by the world. It is important to say that now because the person is always much more than a "persona" if you look through it, so that the character becomes an icon.

These layers can be summed up as the more external ones which contain the psychic defences and the most apparent part of the personality. The typical *ego* defences for Lowen are negation, distrust, guilt, projection and rationalization.

The *muscular layer*, where we find the chronic muscular tensions that support and justify the ego's defences, at the same time protects the person against the subjacent repressed feelings and emotions that the person does not dare express.

The *emotional layer* includes repressed anger, panic or terror, despair, sadness and pain.

The *centre layer* where lives the *core* or *heart*, from where come feelings of love and being loved.

As we can see above, their influence on the body is very clear and to have access to the other layers, psychotherapeutic work must go beyond words.

Lowen pointed out that the failure of most verbal therapies to produce significant changes in personalities is responsible for a great interest in nonverbal therapies. The work on the body through emotions, sensations and movement, provokes changes in the somatic body posture that leads to changes in personality. Interventions can provoke changes from a sub-cortical organism to cortical consciousness and from cortical to sub-cortical. The earlier the interventions, the more the organism reacts from sub-cortical to cortical, or down/up movements forming consciousness from the intervention. The later the interventions, more the organism reacts from cortical to sub-cortical, or up/down inner movements forming consciousness to protect from punishment or danger, if that is the case, or to form positive and negative superego.

The bridge in between cortical and sub cortical systems is the limbic nervous system¹⁴⁵ as we can see in Schore¹⁴⁶ and other trauma researchers. The limbic system is the system where emotions and drives passes, so it works as a bridge controlled by emotions and drives that connects vegetative system (sub cortical) and central nervous system or consciousness (cortical). So, in education and in psychotherapy this bridge is absolutely important in the sense of forming primarily consciousness and from consciousness into feelings and sensations.

Looking at it in this way, it becomes clear that the body's form is created during the education process,¹⁴⁷ through the influences coming from family and community. In his book "Bioenergetics",¹⁴⁸ Lowen shows the influences that will lead to the formation of a pathological character with strong and clear somatic changes in position.

The interesting thing in this chapter from the perspective of Semiotics and Communication will be the overview of the somatic postures and their meaning as seen from Lowen's research. Each of the postures are an icon¹⁴⁹ of the person's life.

¹⁴⁵ a complex system of nerves and networks in the brain, involving several areas near the edge of the cortex concerned with instinct and mood. It controls the basic emotions (fear, pleasure, anger) and drives (hunger, sex, dominance, care of offspring). **Limbic system** (or Paleomammalian brain) is a set of brain structures including the hippocampus, amygdala, anterior thalamic nuclei, and limbic cortex, which support a variety of functions including emotion, behavior, long term memory, and olfaction. The term "limbic" comes from Latin *limbus*, meaning "border" or "belt". The limbic system includes many structures in the cerebral cortex and sub-cortex of the brain. The term has been used within psychiatry and neurology, although its exact role and definition has been revised considerably since the term was introduced.

¹⁴⁶ Schore, Allan, *Affect Regulation and the Origin of the Self*, LEA, New Jersey, USA, 1994

¹⁴⁷ 'Education' here has several differences. In fact I point out the way of development, but this way can be done properly or not, the best way possible or not. For example some parents apply beating the child as education, violence as education and others ways designed to "train" their children and not to educate. Education for me is more connected to a minimum of anguish, so that it is possible to have a two-way learning process, with parents and children learning from each other. This does not mean that sometimes the parents do not have to provide rigid limits to the child's investment.

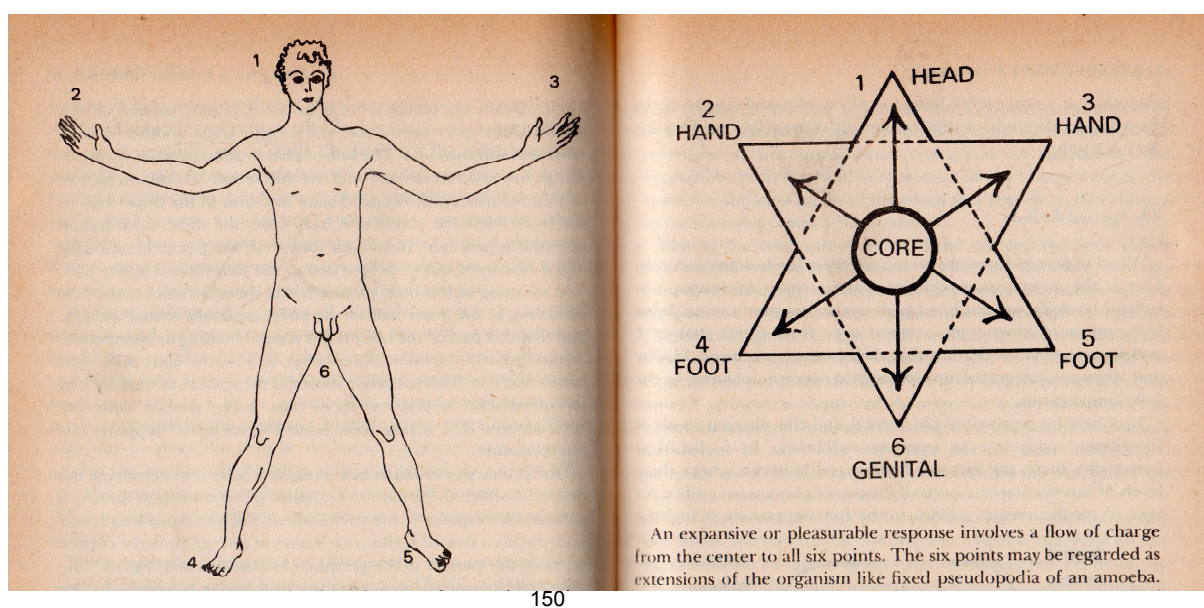
¹⁴⁸ Lowen, Alexander, *Bioenergetica*, Ed. Summus, SP, Brasil, 1994

¹⁴⁹ an icon, because is much more than the first appearance. The first image we look at is just the window to the inner self, and the window is where the defenses park.

A 1. ALEXANDER LOWEN

First let me describe how Lowen arrived at understand the body postures that became the 'Icons' of body-psychotherapy during the seventies.

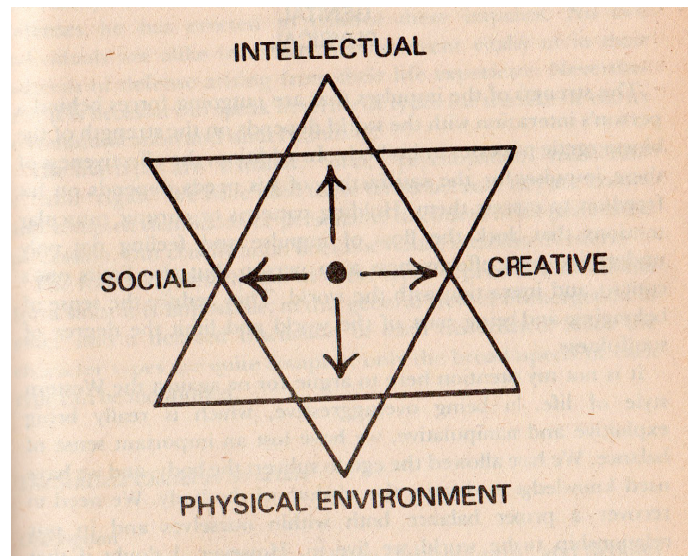
For Lowen, the human body has six major areas of contact with the external world: the face, including the sensory organs in that area, the two hands, the genital apparatus and the two feet. There are also minor areas of contact like the breasts for the woman, the skin in general and the buttocks when sitting. The six major areas are best seen when a person is standing with legs and feet apart and arms and hands outstretched. In the two diagrams below we can see the connections:



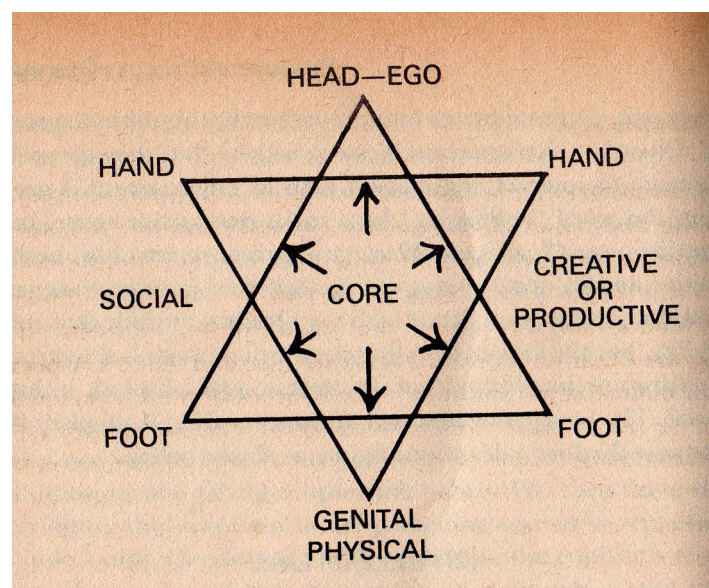
According to Lowen in the diagram above, the star points to the interaction and these forces not only interact with the organism to produce the characteristic stimulus of activities but also make up an organism which aggressively interacts with the environment. Aggressiveness here is a gesture of change without morality or prejudice. In this sense Lowen divides human activities into four groups: intellectual, social, creative and physical. The

¹⁵⁰ Lowen, Alexander, *Bioenergetics*, Penguin Books Ltd, Middlesex, England, 1975

concept becomes clearer if we locate them on the four sides of the figure below:



Now if we combine this diagram with the one below, we arrive at a picture of the dynamic forces involved in the human personality.¹⁵¹



The power of the impulses from centre to periphery depends upon what Lowen calls “bio-energetic processes” of the body that support interaction with the outside world. These impulses are influenced by the

¹⁵¹ Lowen, Alexander, *Bioenergetics*, Penguin Books Ltd, Middlesex, England, 1975

freedom of expression to find the satisfaction they are looking for. Holding patterns or chronic muscular tensions that block the flow of impulse and feelings limit one's contact and interaction with the world and the person becomes less effective.

In bioenergetics, the different pathological character structures are classified into five basic types. Each type has a special pattern of defence on both the psychological and the muscular levels that distinguishes it from other types. It is important to note that this is a classification not of people but of defensive positions. It is recognized that no individual is a pure type and that every person in our culture combines some or all of these defensive patterns within his personality to different and varying degrees. Lowen says that for bioenergetics it is necessary to speak in terms of types for the sake of clarity in communication and understanding. The five types are: schizoid, oral, psychopathic, masochistic and rigid. Lowen used these terms because they are known and accepted definitions of personality disorders. In psychoanalytical terms we can say that from schizoid to masochistic they are pre-oedipal characters and the rigid character are oedipal with different characteristics.

We are now going to take a very broad look at aspects of each personality and which kind of somatic posture each of them develop, but before that let's quote:

I have always loved the title of Otto Kernberg's book, "Internal World, External Reality". It so succinctly describes Object Relations Theory. We construct our internal world to correspond to our early external reality. Once constructed, that internal world helps us understand and cope with what is out there. We construct the best strategies for coping that are available at the time to manage that external reality. However, this internal world based on an early external reality, and the strategies for coping with that earlier time, have become fixed. We then go through life seeing the external world through our internal world-view. We will do extraordinary things to get that external reality to match our internal world. We keep on coping with external reality as if it

*hasn't changed. And, we don't acknowledge the change in ourselves. By operating with this outdated map and the strategies that complement it, we can get into a lot of trouble.*¹⁵²

A.1.2 The Schizoid Character Structure¹⁵³

The origin of this structure shows that in all cases there was an early rejection by the mother that threatened the existence of the child. This kind of rejection and hostility created a fear that any reaching out, demanding, or self assertion would lead to annihilation. The child loses the choice to have clear contact and has to dissociate himself from reality and from his own body in order to survive. One quick example would be a baby with a rejecting mother; one who does not recognize the baby and his needs. Sometimes not only rejecting the baby, but even looking at it with hateful eyes. In order to defend itself from these forceful and repetitive rejections and attacks, the baby avoids looking into the mother's eyes or meeting the cold, unreceptive look, in this way starting to create a division between the inner and outer worlds, protecting the very fragile 'ego' that is developing, but finding a way to survive independent of that specific environment.

Later in this chapter let's see what this sequence of relationship can be *semiotic*, in a way of producing sense not only subjectively but also by changing the natural posture of a possible accepting mother into the rejecting one: what happens with the subjectivity and with the somatic posture of that baby on that kind of relationship.

So, the schizoid personality according to Lowen is of individuals with tendencies to:

¹⁵² From Johnson's Stephen, *Character Styles*, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., NYC, NY, USA.

¹⁵³ The descriptions made for all characters are simplified, and readers can have a deeper overview in Lowen's book on Bioenergetics.

- a. split the unitary function of the personality;
 - b. withdraw inwardly, breaking or losing contact with the world or external reality.

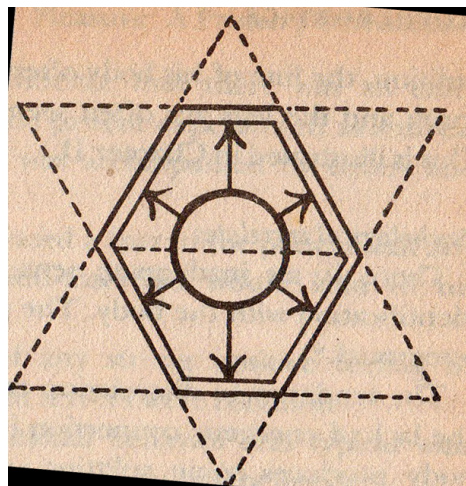
For example, thinking tends to be dissociated from feeling. The term schizoid according to Lowen describes a person whose sense of self is diminished, whose ego is weak and whose contact with the body and its feelings greatly reduced.

The bio-energetic conditions show that the energy¹⁵⁴ does not flow to the peripheral structures of the body - the organs that make contact with the external world such as the face, hands, genitals and feet. The core excitation does not flow freely and stays blocked by muscular tensions at the base of the head, shoulders, pelvis and hip joints. The outcome is that the functions of these organs become dissociated from feelings.

The charge of energy and potency stays blocked in the core of the body, and only with some kind of provocation will it rise and be discharged, released and then go back inside for control and protection. The defence is undertaken by muscular tension.

The physical aspects in the majority of cases display the body as being narrow and contracted and, in cases of paranoid personalities, the body will become more athletic and fuller, but full of tensions. The face is mask like, the eyes are not alive and do not make contact, the arms hang rather than act as extensions of the body, the feet are contracted and cold, the weight of the body is carried on the outside of the body. Usually there is a discrepancy between the two halves of the body, in many cases they might look as though they belonging to two different people.

¹⁵⁴ Energy for bioenergetics means the source of doing, the fluids that flow through the body provoking movement. Energy depends on contact with the outside world, working with energy streams in working with energetic expression and the form of the body.



In this way, the body avoids intimate relationships and shows hypersensitivity owing to a weak ego boundary which is the psychological counterpart of the lack of charge at the periphery. The person therefore withdraws in order to resist outside pressure.

The origin of this structure shows that in all cases there was an early rejection by the mother that threatened the existence of the child. This kind of rejection and hostility created a fear that any reaching out, demanding or self assertion would lead to annihilation. The child loses any kind of choice and has to dissociate from reality and from his body in order to survive.¹⁵⁵

A.1.3 The Oral Character Structure

The oral character has difficulty in standing on its own two feet both literally and symbolically. He will tend to cling to others. Using the support of others is also reflected in the ability to be alone, exaggerating the need for contact to get warmth and support. As an example we could think about a baby that might receive caring physically and not subjectively; for instance the mother feeds the baby but does not give affectionate attention, causing a constant feeling of missing something warm and fulfilling.

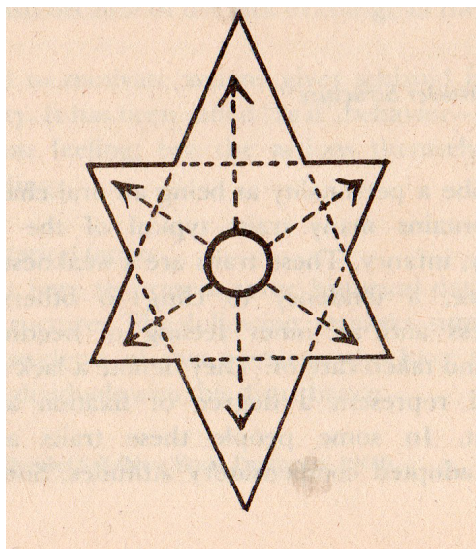
¹⁵⁵ More about this in: Lowen Alexander, *Bioenergetics*, page 155, Penguin Books, London, England.

There is an inner feeling of emptiness. His low level of energy will lead the oral character into depression and euphoria. The early deprivation might be due to either the loss or absence of the mother figure for any number of reasons including death. There are other experiences of disappointment in the early life as he or she tries to reach the father for contact, warmth and support. Such disappointments may leave a feeling of bitterness in the personality.

The oral personality contains many traits typical of the oral period of life during infancy. Usually these traits are a weakness in the sense of independence, with tendencies to cling to others, a lack of aggression and a deep inner need to be supported, taken care of and held by others. Some people with this structure can show an exaggerated independence that usually fails when under stress. There is a constant inner sense of deprivation.

Energetically, the oral structure is undercharged, with the energy flowing out to the periphery but very weakly. Physically the body grows linearly, for reasons that are not fully clear, becoming a long, thin body. Lowen points out two possible explanations: one is a delay in maturing, thus allowing the bones to grow excessively, another possibility is the lack of strength in the underdeveloped muscles to hold the bones' growth.

The lower part of the body shows a very low level of energy, because the energy coming from up to down is underdeveloped. The contact with the environment is therefore undercharged. The diagram for this personality is as below:



This differs from the schizoid because it is not tightly contracted. The muscles are underdeveloped, mainly in the arms and legs. The legs are usually long, the feet thin and narrow. It looks like the legs are not strong enough to keep the person standing whilst showing immaturity. The pelvis may be smaller than normal in both men and women. The breathing is shallow and good breathing depends on the ability to suck in air. Deprivation reduces the power to suck.

The oral character has difficulty in standing on his own two feet both literally and symbolically. He will tend to cling to others. Standing on others is also reflected in the ability to be alone, exaggerating the need for contact to get warmth and support.

There is an inner feeling of emptiness. His low level of energy will lead the oral character into depression and euphoria. The early deprivation might be due to either the loss or absence of the mother figure for any number of reasons including death. There are other experiences of disappointment in the early life as he or she tries to reach the father for contact, warmth and support. Such disappointments may leave a feeling of bitterness in the personality.

A.1.4 The Psychopathic Character Structure

As in all character types, the person's history explains his behaviour. The most important factor is a sexually seductive parent. The seduction is done to tie the child to the parent and his narcissistic needs. In this situation, when the child tries to reach out she will feel very vulnerable, thus creating an upward inhalation contained in the upper part of the body without the possibility of releasing it and allowing it to move downwards.

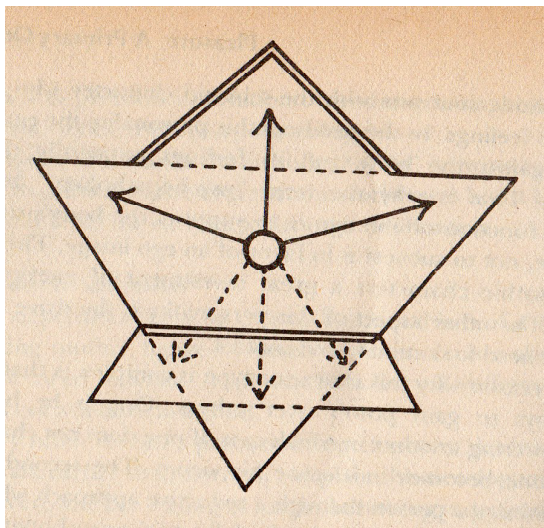
Quoting Stephen Johnson, in his book 'Character Styles', he reminds us of the classic archetypal mother figure who narcissistically cathects her own child as the 'stage mother'. This typically pathetic character lives through the artistic expression of her offspring and loses her own boundaries in this identification. Typically, the stage mother's child is used in the hope of remedying the disappointments and deficiencies in the mother's own life. As a consequence, there is a desperate quality to the overseeing provided by the stage mother. In the film 'Fame', the character of Doris Finsecker is accompanied by a classic stage mother. Her mother periodically intervenes and interferes as Doris auditions for the New York School of Performing Arts. When she is later called with the auditions results, the mother says anxiously, "Well is she in or out?" Upon receiving the answer, she turns from the phone and says passionately, "Doris, we made it!".¹⁵⁶

In the example we can how much the mother uses and seduces the daughter for her own benefit, damaging the quality of the real feelings the daughter might feel.

The essence of the psychopathic attitude is the denial of feelings. There are two body types that correspond to the two psychopathic structures. The overpowering type gains power by rising over the other. There is a big displacement of energy towards the head with a relative reduction of the charge in the lower part of the body, as we can see in the diagram. The two halves of the body are disproportionate, with the upper part being much larger than the lower.

¹⁵⁶ Johnson, Stephen, *Character Styles*, W. Norton and Company, New York, NY, USA, 1994

The mental apparatus is overexcited to control and master situations. Eyes are distrustful, and the closing of the eyes is very characteristic of this personality.



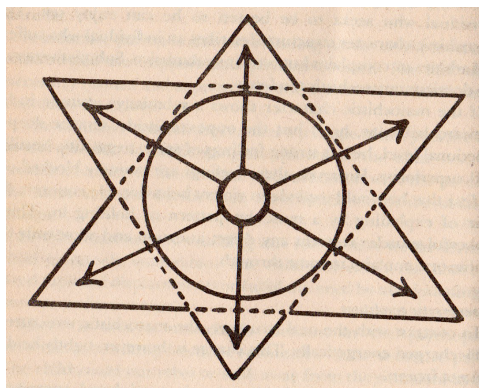
The body gives the impression of being blown up and corresponds to the individual's blown up ego image. It looks top heavy and rigid, while the lower part of the body is narrower and may show the typical weaknesses of the oral character structure.

A.1.5 The Masoquistic Character Structure

According to Lowen the masochistic structure develops in a family with love and acceptance combined with severe pressure. The mother is dominant and sacrificing, the father is passive and submissive. The child at the age around 2 ½ to 3 years old, is ready to experience things it has learned up until then. If the parents are very severe and do not allow the child to experience its autonomy, all the energy and power ready to do this will be held in the muscles and guts and the child will develop an "I won't" or "I can't" response to the world's demands and will not be able to discharge and get the pleasure of it. The person will develop a very sensitive personality, but one that is held in. He will be a complaining and painful person. Let's therefore just imagine a child ready to play with toys but cannot because he will get dirty, he will be in

pain and complaining. The person will usually need strong and invasive movements in order to feel.

The masochistic structure is fully charged, being very tightly held-in energetically but not frozen. The expressive action will be limited because of the tight grip on it in which a compression and collapse of the organism is created. The collapse occurs at the waist as the body bends under its tensions. The neck and the waist hold the impulses moving up and down, because of the strong sense of anxiety. There is a reduction of extension which shortens the structure.



The physical characteristics are very clear as the body is short, thick and muscular. The short, thick neck shows a head that is pulling in. The waist is also shorter and thicker. The pelvis pulls forward, like a dog with its tail between his legs.

Psychologically, as a consequence of the tightening, aggression and self assertion are greatly reduced. Whining and complaining becomes part of the personality expression, becoming a provocative behaviour that will enable the person to react violently and explosively. The person feels stuck in a morass, with difficulties in moving freely.

A.1.6 The Rigid Character Structure

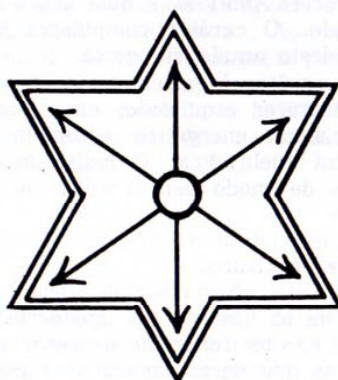
The significant trauma here is the experience of frustration in the striving for erotic gratification and giving in to emotions that seem to put them

at risk of losing control and power over situations. The rigid structure might come from the age of 3 when the oedipal phase of development starts, when sexuality and rivalry are involved, and because the issue is triadic, involving a system rather than a dyad. The oedipal issue is the classic complex involving love, sexuality and competition. Such complex interactions can occur with other issues as well, but they always occur with oedipal ones.

Lowen (1958) has associated the oedipal aetiology with a number of character related expressions, including hysteric, obsessive compulsive, passive, feminine and phallic narcissistic. Each of these expressions has a characteristically somatic posture and energy flow in the rigid structures. This structure is called rigid because it keeps the somatic posture without relaxing or discharging the emotion, giving up to the Other or to a situation. When there is release it would be very quick in order not to lose control of the situation, as this is the main issue of the rigid structure either in the sense of sexuality, affection or others, due to the excessive seduction of the parents in order to control them.

The desire for physical intimacy was drawn from rejection by the parents, making them move under guard, but with manoeuvres to find closeness.

In this structure there is a strong charge at the periphery to contact with the environment. The periphery holds back the feelings inside, limiting its expression. The main areas of tension are the long muscles of the body. Extensor and flexor muscles combine with spasticity to produce rigidity.



The body is proportionate and harmonious, looking and feeling integrated and connected. An important characteristic is the aliveness of the body: bright eyes, skin colour and aliveness of gesture and movement. If the rigidity is severe there is a reduction in the qualities above. The rigidity derives from the tendency of those individuals to hold themselves stiffly and with pride. They are defensive against being used, manipulated or trapped. They hold the impulses creating a rigid positioning in the back, with a high degree of control.

A.1.7 The Hierarchy of Character Types and a bill of Rights

The character structure defines the way an individual handles his need to love, his reaching out for intimacy and closeness, and the striving for pleasure. From this point of view, the different character structures form a hierarchy:

The *schizoid character* avoids intimate closeness.

The *oral character* can establish closeness only on the basis of his need for support and warmth on an infantile basis.

The *psychopathic character* can relate only to those who need him and that he is able to control.

The *masochistic character* is only capable of establishing closeness through a submissive attitude.

The *rigid character* forms close relationships but remains on guard not to surrender.

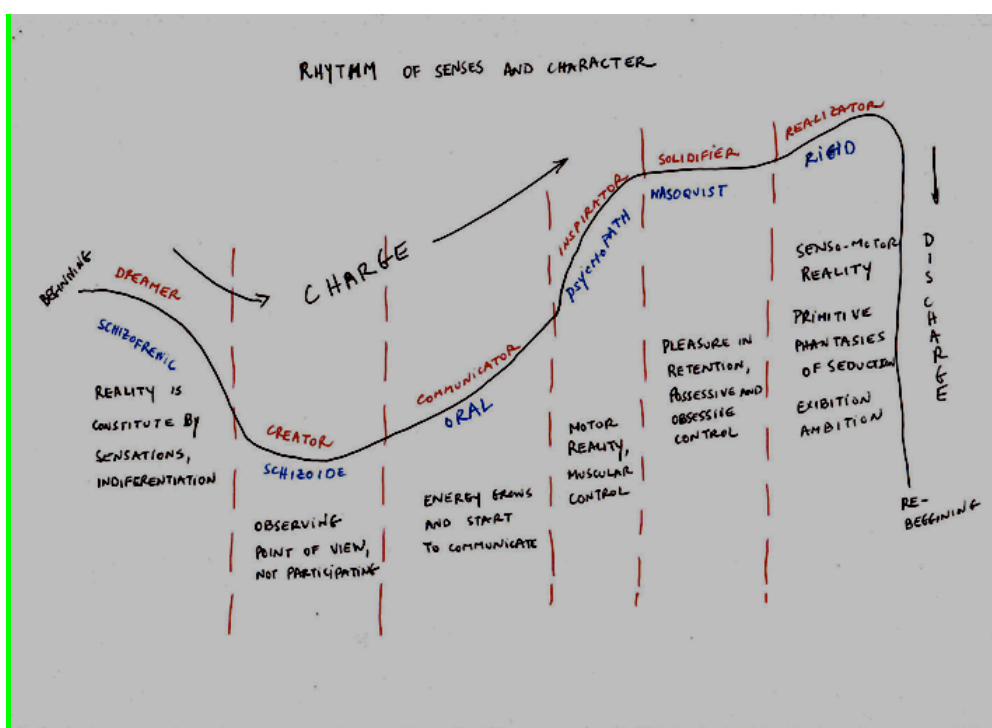
The US bio-energetic therapist Ronald Robbins, Lowen's disciple, created the following polarities for character development. Each phase corresponds to phases from birth through until 5 years old, and at the same

time can be applied to any developmental situation for human beings. The polarities interest us because they show the pathological side of development as well as the healthy side, so that the relationship between both would be very close to human behaviour. The same schizoid character, closed in within herself, could therefore be the 'creator' phase, i.e., by being introspective she is having a chance to create a meaning for her life inside.

The oral will be the "communicator", the psychopath the "inspirer", the masochist the "solidifier", the rigid the "achiever". Robbins calls the character of the first stage of development the "dreamer" because it is the starting point of life or anything we plan in life. However, if the child remains fixed at this stage it will develop a pathology that could be a polarity for the dreamer which is the problem of "schizophrenia", where the person lives out their life in their own dreams missing contact with her own body and the external world.

In each of these stages we find one's history and senses, so that the names are metaphors of one's life stage with a particular subjective and somatic posture as we can see in the diagrams developed by Lowen.

A.1.8 Rhythm of Senses and Character



This diagram of rhythm and senses also shows the energetic¹⁵⁷ flow of a child from newborn up until the age of 5 years. When the baby is born, the energy is very low and the main thing is to be kept provided with food, affection and contact, allowing the baby to be internalized in himself most of the time, dreaming and creating through use of its first contacts and relationships from the world. After getting some strength from feeding he will be able to start communicating from what he has learned through his first contacts, becoming a “communicator” - stronger and more ready to be interested, inspiring and inspired by the external world, starting to learn more and play with things in general. In the following stage he will start to “solidify” things that he has inspired, solidify means of learning how to be used. All these stages are pre-oedipal, i.e., the main relationship is with the mother. At 3 years old, when the baby starts to recognize the sexual difference between boys and girls, is when the father comes in, and babies must learn to share and surrender to the sharing with the different other. It is here that he starts to “achieve” what he has learned and provide service to the world, thus becoming an “achiever”.

Each of these stages carries a history and a meaning that could be a semiotic meaning installed in the subjectivity and in the posture. Body, sense and affection are enrolled in the formation of subjectivity and inter-subjectivity, and we can experience the formation of meaning long before language, during the first stages of learning, with great intensity in non verbal language. The baby becoming a subject becomes a semiotic subject. As Violi¹⁵⁸ wrote: “semiosis and consciousness are, in ontogenetic development, inextricably linked to one another.” In Stanley Keleman’s postures, we will see an interesting relationship between the subjective and objective semiotic meanings, the virtual and the body.

During development, the first five years of life are highly determining in meanings for life. Afterwards, during adolescence, sense, meaning and

¹⁵⁷ energy here means the quantity of life produced by the organism as is being fed by the mother and the environment.

¹⁵⁸ Violi, Patrizia, *Distributed intersubjectivity semiosis: ontogenesis, consciousness and semiosis*, Dept. of Communication, UNIBO, Italy, 2008.

affection will again be of fundamental importance in the formation of identity and personality on posture and subjectivity.

A.2 STANLEY KELEMAN

Keleman is a researcher in the study of the body and its connections to emotional, psychological, sexual and imaginative aspects of the human experience. He lives in Berkeley, California, where he is the director of The Center of Energetic Studies. In Germany at one time, he was an associate of Karlfried Von Durckheim at a Centre of Religious Studies, where he expanded his knowledge in psychology of the religious and the depth of life that looks at the human form as a revelation of the divine. Back in the US, he went to California where he met the mythologist Joseph Campbell, with whom he spent 15 years developing the connections between myth and the body.

In his book *Emotional Anatomy*¹⁵⁹ he calls our attention to the phenomenological approach of occidental anatomy: the body as the place of experience, and the form of the organism as a strategy for existence; a body that pulsates from the relational affection in its genetic programming.

Keleman writes that life produces forms and these forms are part of a process of organization that gives body to emotions, thoughts and experiences, thereby forming a structure. The forms show a historical protoplasmatic process that ends in a personal human form. Molecules, cells, organisms, groups and colonies are the initial forms of life movement.

He writes that our metamorphosis moves from rhythmic and pulsating cells to a pulsating, multi-rhythmic organism. This organism can function with dissonant and asymmetric patterns that will develop patterns of integrationally opposed complexes. Those patterns of pulsating tubes establish self-identity, generating feelings that we recognize as ours, giving a dimension to

¹⁵⁹ Keleman, Stanley, *Anatomia Emocional*, Summus Editorial, 1992, São Paulo, Brasil

existence, and creating an interior and exterior, a depth and a surface. This interiority and exteriority are fundamental in the anatomy of feelings and the concept of the self.

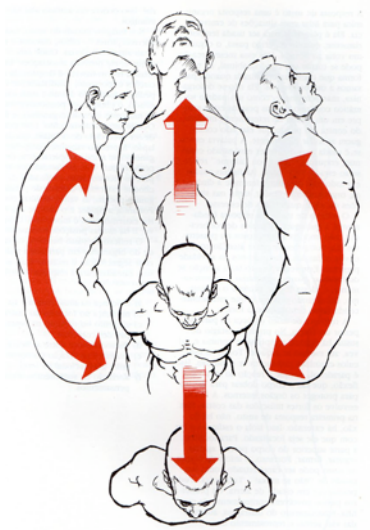
Pulsation is the movement inside and outside for all living forms and it starts at cell level. The act of pulsation creates a bombardment and this bombardment will become the basis of many functions including: the exchange of liquids, breathing, absorption of food and excretion. The whole organism is thus a group of peristaltic tubes, pulsating with different intensities and amplitudes.

Later on, the form of the person will be moulded by the internal and external experiences: birth, development, differentiation, relationships, making love, work...etc. During this process the form is imprinted by the challenges and tensions of existence, love and disappointments.

According to Keleman, growing takes place from an organizational principle that involves a genetic, personal and social form. In front of the world, we have an erect position. The soft front part of the body is exposed and ready to move forward and inward. If we face aggressions from the world, those aggressions will develop a temporarily startled reflex¹⁶⁰ to the scary situation; if that continues it can become perpetuated as stress. The erectable position facing the world is interrupted and we defend ourselves. In the figure below we can see four answers to the fear in the body:

¹⁶⁰ The startled reflex is a reflex against a scary situation and consists of a series of alarms during a continuum. It starts with an investigation, followed by assertion, then by annoyance after which comes anger or absence, and finally submission or collapse. If the first response releases the aggression, the organism goes back to homeostasis. In a contrary situation, one comes after the other. The continuum of answers to fear follows an order and can come in different steps. Keleman, Stanley, *Anatomia Emocional*, Summus Editorial, 1992, São Paulo, Brasil, page 78.

Ready to action



Forward bending, closing, shirink

hyper extension, withdraw

Colapse, internal fall

The initial stage is to investigate, challenge and remain upright. Let's have a look at each of these stages separately:



The position on the middle, investigative in the face of the aggression



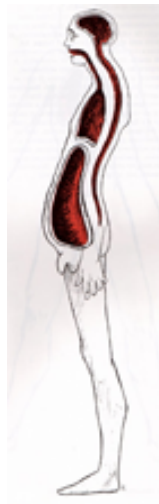
ready to action



rigidity, hyper-extension, withdrawn



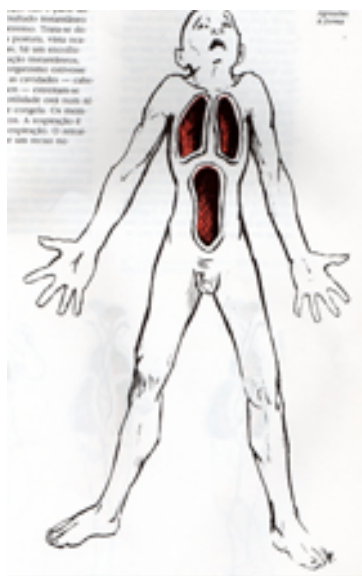
tension and spasticity



submission

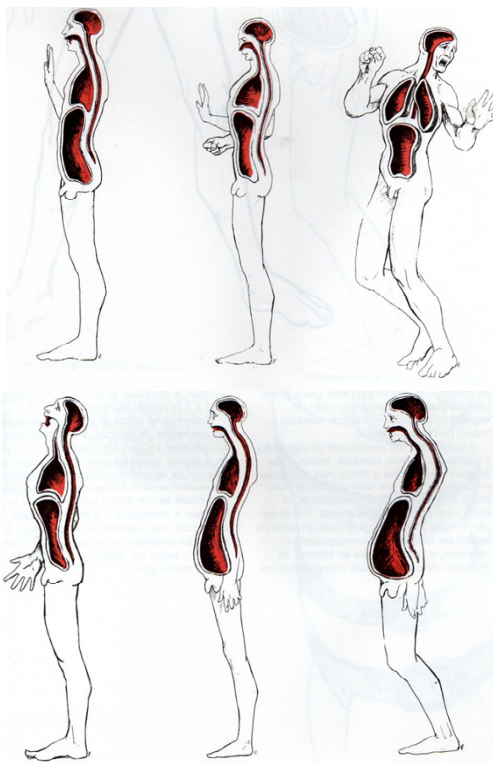


Collapse



Terror

The continuum of the startled reflex shows the answers to the menace in which the segments progressively harden. There is a contraction of muscles and restraint of the neural tube:



The *continuum* of the startled/stressed reaction reveals that the organism first pulls upward, separates the superior half from the inferior half, going into the chest, diaphragm, throat and brain away from the pelvis. Later on this separation becomes a real segmentation between the superior and inferior. Segmentation also occurs when there is rotation or turning as a defence with the body.

The organism turns away from itself and from others, but if it is not capable of doing it, the energy and movement flows in two directions at the same time: goes and stays. It divides itself, the muscles going in opposite directions, or in another sense, at the same time that the movement is blocked, it creates a shrinking, and the vital space disappears. For example it creates a conflict between the erectus position and the collapse.

The figures below show two phenomenon: the reflex patterns in the face of fear and the patterns of stress. The first are temporary and are used for emergence, while the latter are going to become a consolidation of the positions.

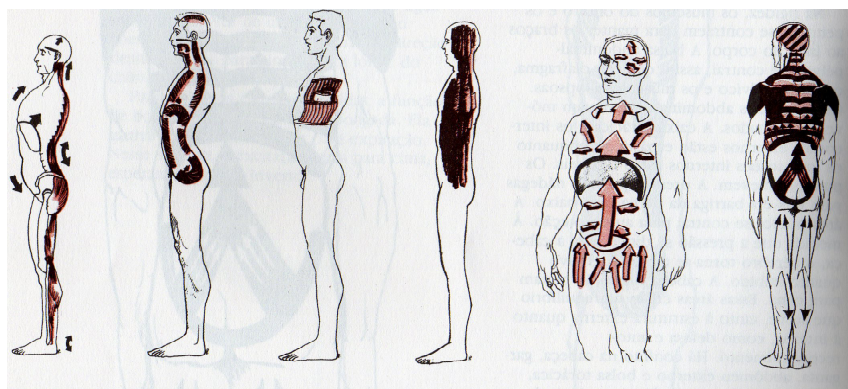
For Keleman, these somatic patterns are processes of a deep self perception – a way of feeling and knowing the world. They are more than mechanical; they are a *form* of intelligence. The internal produces muscle states, from the top of the head to the tip of the toes. The muscles become organized in a configuration, and this configuration becomes our way of being and recognizing the world and our selves, and the way the world recognize us.

The organism deals with aggression in two ways - either resist or give up. Keleman calls the organism that resists '*overbound*', and the organism that gives up '*underbound*'. To resist creating overtones for the muscles, they become hypertonic and cease from creating undertones or hypotonic muscles.

A.2.1 Patterns of Somatic Distress

In a very compact and simple manner, I will show here a vision of the rigid, dense, inflated and collapsed structures based on development concepts of the *overbound and underbound*. The emotional organization of these four structures shows how experience and personal conflicts are expressed in its morphology, how the internal layers and tubes are affected, how mobility is distorted, and what the emotional results of the excitation and its streams are.¹⁶¹

A.2.2 Rigid structure



¹⁶¹ More in: Keleman, Stanley, *Emotional Anatomy*, Summus Editorial, 1992, São Paulo, Brasil

Each figure represents a different aspect of the structure, in order of appearance: gravitational muscles, pulsation bags, tubes, layers, forces of direction, excitatory forces. In his book we can see this expressed more fully, but I do not think that is my aim here, so in very simple language, Keleman defines this structure as:

Independence is his scream.

Solitude, his reward.

Consideration, his point.

Domination, his brand.

Adoration, his need,

Despite, what, in fact, arouses

Arrogance is his fear.

Competence his dream.

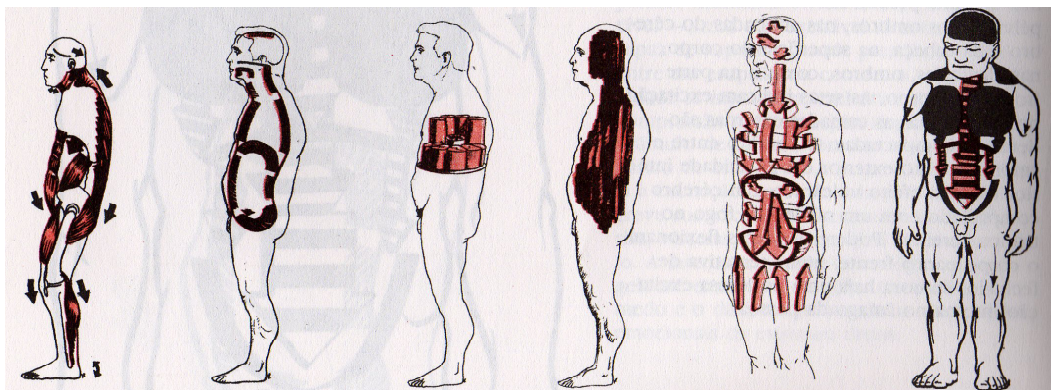
His secret is the will to be received.

Be loved, instead of love.

What comes from inside, he resists.

To get into the other, however, he insists.

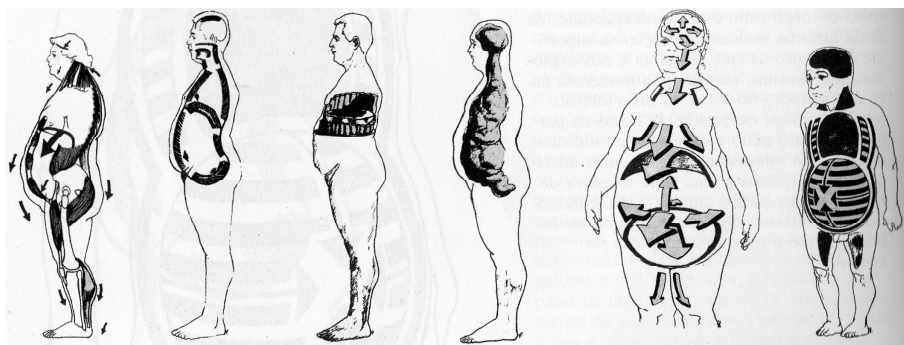
A.2.3 Dense Structure



Again, each figure represents a different aspect: gravitational muscles, pulsation bags, tubes, layers, forces directions, excitatory forces. In his book we can see more this expressed more fully, here in a simple language, Keleman defines this structure as:

*Freedom is his scream, martyrdom his reward
 Empathy his brand, treason his fear.
 Be appreciated and approved are his needs,
 And to get it, fight with tenacity.
 Independence is his dream, be in peace, his wish.
 His secret is the will to bond with the other, keeping individuality.
 To have roots, to belong, be accepted without having to be isolated.*

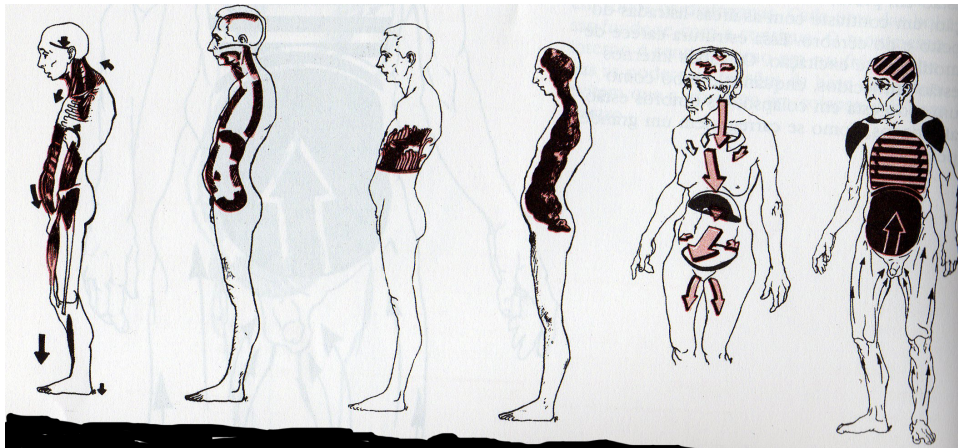
A.2.4 The inflated structure



Again, each figure represents a different aspect: gravitational muscles, pulsation bags, tubes, layers, forces directions, excitatory forces. In his book we can see more this expressed more fully, here in a simple language, Keleman defines this structure as:

*In the search for a body to stay, that belongs to him and nobody else.
 All potential, according to the will of others.
 Promise but do not do it, even when promising a lot.
 Prisoner of the trap between impressing or possessing the other
 Eternally optimistic and jovial
 Always wanting to be big, always neglecting the infantile.
 Leave outside, swelling or being swelled.*

A.2.5 Collapsed structure



Again, each figure represents a different aspect: gravitational muscles, pulsation bags, tubes, layers, forces directions, excitatory forces. In his book we can see this expressed more fully, but here in very simple language, Keleman defines this structure as:

*They fantasize, but do not dare to dream, afraid of waking up
Loneliness is his pain, even so as not to surrender to the other.*

His brand is empathy.

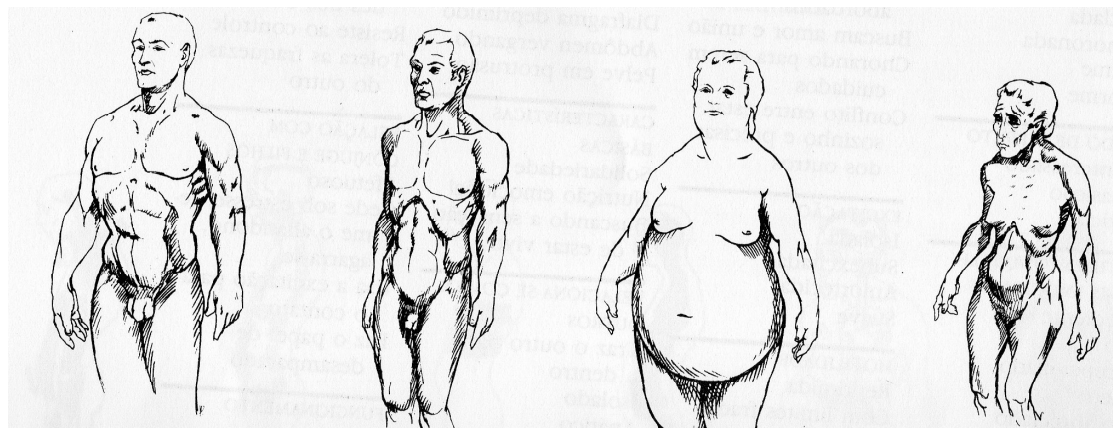
His aim is not to love, but to be taken care of.

To want is to die.

Avoid cold, but feel heat.

A.2.6 Comparing the four structures

The following set of figures compares the four structures by showing the effects that pressure and mobility exercise on the pulsation bags, vertical peristalses, excitation flow, circular forces, distortions of the tube, from in to out, and out to in, and how the pattern of distress is reflected in each defence pattern.



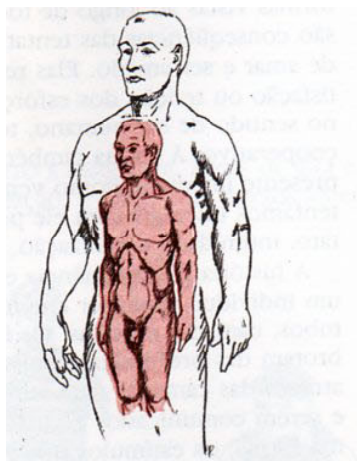
From left to right: rigid (controlled and obedient), dense (challenged and ashamed), inflated (invasive and manipulative), collapsed (complacent and compromising).

A.2.7 Somatic Reality

Human beings are complex emotional configurations. There is no one perfect form, ideal type or structure that is better than the other. The forms Keleman describes are consequences of the human attempts to love and be loved. The forms represent the immediate present, how we see the world and how we try to interact to get contact, intimacy and achievement.

The history of the emotional experience of a person can be found in the tubes, layers and pulsation bags of the organism. The impulses grow out of deep pulsations and cross the layers to communication and satisfaction. The stimulus coming from outside also crosses our layers to the depths of our selves.

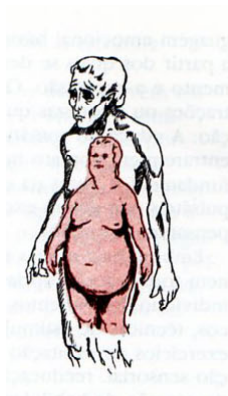
In real life, the somatic reality combines layers and segments to acquire emotional logic to a specific person. Some individuals are therefore a combination of the structures; as we can see in the figures below which present combinations of *overbound and underbound*:



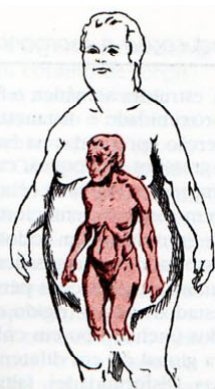
rigid out
dense in



dense out
rigid in



collapsed out
inflated in



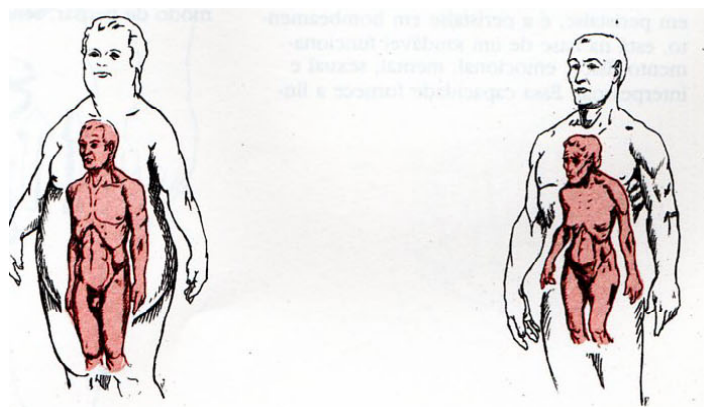
inflated out
collapsed in



dense out
collapsed in



inflated out
rigid in



inflated out

dense in

rigid out

colapsed in

The somatic structure reflects the rules of intimacy and distance, tenderness and assertion, learned in the family of origin. Aggression and shocks, stress and distress are imprinted in each cell, creating a somatic, emotional and psychological image that lies present inside all the other events in life.

The categories expressed as rigid, dense, inflated and in collapse do not indicate a psychopathology, mental disorder or physical sickness. Neither do they constitute a simplified typology inside which we can categorize everyone. What they represent is the somatic reality – the interaction between genetic data and a personal emotional history that is reflected in our form and in our way of thinking, feeling and acting.

A.3 Gerda Boyesen, Biodynamic Psychology

Gerda Boyesen was born in Bergen in 1922, and died in London in 2005. Her first marriage was to Carl Boyesen. In 1947 she read a book by Wilhelm Reich which made a strong impression on her. Shortly thereafter she began therapy with Ola Raknes, a vegetotherapist who had been trained by Reich.

Later she studied psychology in Oslo and received training as a physiotherapist which led to her working with Aadel Bülow-Hansen. Through her own therapy Boyesen came to better understand the connection between repressed emotions and muscle tensions. In her book *Über den Körper die Seele heilen* she established, and partly described in a very personal manner, how she developed her own therapeutic method by linking the beginnings of Wilhelm Reich, Carl Gustav Jung and Sigmund Freud, through her own studies, her own therapeutic experience and her own practice.

Working on the body, with psychoterapeutic massage, firstly through the muscles, tissues and hearing the visceral movement, through what she called psychoperistalses¹⁶², Gerda started to interpret and learn the meanings of a person through the qualities of their muscles and tissues. Influenced by Jung, Reich and Freud, she developed her own methods and classifications of peoples somatic postures and characters.

In Biodynamic Psychotherapy clients are described in terms of energy types. They look at how permeable their flesh is for the libido and life energy and the speed at which the energy is flowing. The energy types are:

a. The Warrior

A positive warrior would be a person who is in touch with a vital level in the muscles, and this means the capacity to make things happen. The excessive warrior would have semi armoured muscles, sometimes over reactive and wanting to fight all the time. He is open and triggered by external stimuli, but still has a closed connection to his inner self. He may be over emphasizing emotions rather than being grounded in vital energy.

b. Sunshine

In the Sunshine character there is a flow of energy and fluids

¹⁶² The digestion of emotions through the peristaltic movement of the intestine. Gerda in her research discover that peristaltic movements of the intestine also digest the emotions through its movement. More about that in: Boyesen, Gerda, *Entre Psiquê e Soma*, Ed. Summus, São Paulo, Brasil, 1987

through the muscles and out into the skin and aura. The person can feel the qualities of melting, happiness, tenderness and sensitivity. The person can feel affected and emotionally touched, without being overwhelmed.

c. Prince/Princess and the Pea¹⁶³

In this character from the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale we find the positive qualities of intuition, spirituality, clear hearing, clear seeing. On the other hand there could be an excessive quality leading to over sensitivity, ungroundedness, confusion and being overwhelmed.

d. Rock character

The Rock is in good contact with the bones, the inner structure. He does not yield or collapse, is able to contain the emotions until the appropriate time for them to be expressed. He is reliable and unmovable.

The excessive Rock has very strong muscle armour. The person becomes cut off from their own libido, their feelings and their sense of the self, finding little pleasure in life. It is difficult to develop intimacy and becomes hard to relate to the Rock.

These biodynamic characters are very close to what Fontanille¹⁶⁴ described:

the sensorial universe is already organized according to two

¹⁶³ From Wikipedia: "The Princess and the Pea" (Danish: "Prinsessen paa Ærten"; "Prinsessen på ærten" in modern orthography) is a fairy tale by Danish poet and author Hans Christian Andersen about a young woman whose claim to being a real princess is tested by placing a pea under her mattresses. The tale likely had its source in folk material, and, in the Aarne and Thompson classification of folktales, "The Princess and the Pea" is categorized under its own type as type 703, The Princess on the Pea. *A prince wants to marry a real princess. He travels about the world searching for a real princess but returns home disappointed. One evening, a young woman claiming to be a real princess seeks shelter from a storm in the prince's castle. The prince's mother decides to test the validity of her claim by placing a single pea on a bedstead and piling twenty mattresses and twenty feather beds atop it. There, the young woman spends the night. In the morning, she tells her hosts she endured a sleepless night, being kept awake by something hard in the bed. The prince rejoices. Only a real princess possesses the delicacy to feel a pea through twenty mattresses and twenty feather beds. The two are married, and live happily ever after.*

¹⁶⁴ Fontanille, Jacques, *Figure Del Corpo*, Meltemi Editore, Roma, 2004, pa. 196

directions (movement and posture). The movement is connected with the quality of 'force' and posture with the quality of 'shape'.

In the practice of these concepts, biodynamic therapists find the meanings contained in the quality of the muscles, the skin, the space between muscles and skin and in the sounds produced by the peristaltic movement of the intestines that Gerda Boyesen called “psycho-peristalsis”¹⁶⁵. The sensations have a meaning in itself connected with the semiotics of sensations.

A.4 David Boadella - Biosynthesis Somatic Psychotherapy ¹⁶⁶

Boadella developed the concepts and clinic of “Motor Fields and Postures of the Soul”. As was said in the last chapter, in motor fields, he worked with an emotional anatomy in reply to the strong interferences which separate people from being in contact with their potential and strengths, being interferences which go so far as to form somatic postures of character, directed by the demands of the outside world. There is a great difference when the movements arise from internal stimulus and not from stimulus from the other. There are two nerve impulses which standardize these movements, such being, quite simply, the alpha nerve which is linked to the system of voluntary action, and the gamma nerve which is linked to the system of

¹⁶⁵ Psycho-peristalsis is the digestion of the emotions in the peristaltic movements of the intestines, Boyesen researched the idea that the peristaltic movement is not only connected with the digestion of food, but also with the digestion of emotions, through listening to the viscera using a stethoscope during biodynamic massage treatment in patients with difficult emotionality. To read more: Boyesen, Gerda, *Entre Psiquê e Soma*, Ed. Summus, São Paulo, 1987

¹⁶⁶ Boadella was the headmaster of school for children in Dorset, England. During that time he already observed how the children relate to each other in a dancing and nonverbal way most of the time. He studied vegetotherapy in the beginning of the fifties in Norway with Dr. Ola Raknes, a student of W. Reich. He developed a method of psychotherapy based on the formative process. Influenced beyond the previous people with Francis Mott (umbilical affect and fetal skin), Frank Lake (pre and peri natal psychology). Neville Coghill developed the kinesthetic affect. From the embryodynamic model to a clear and articulated biosystemic point of view that understands emotional somatic events as aspects of self formation or formation of the self.

readiness which is intentional, involving humour and reflexes. The voluntary movement, in the majority of cases, due to the external interferences, places itself over spontaneous involuntary movements, and hence working at the gamma level is a way of contacting the non-conscious or the unconscious worlds without using words.

The concept of motor fields was developed through Piaget's research into motor feelings. From there the German embryologist Erich Blechschmidt developed the idea of embryo-dynamic fields, describing eight types of force fields: flexion, extension, pulling, opposition, rotation, channelling, absorption and activation. Each one of these fields relates to the different phases of the development of the communication of the self with the external world and moves along according to the ideas of Daniel Stern. In the process of development, the main motor fields, either singly or in combination, are involved in all the steps of development, from free floating inside the uterus, through birth and breastfeeding, to crawling, standing up, picking things up and all the later abilities which are necessary to the sensory-motor balance in the affected relations, each one possessing a physical-emotional importance which will influence the therapeutic relationship and the posture in relation to life.

A.4.1 Postures of the Soul

According to Boadella's article on Postures of the Soul¹⁶⁷ we can learn that:

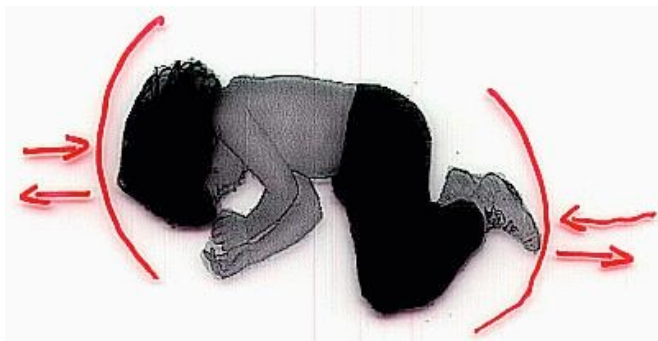
The external form of the person reflects his internal disposal. This is the simply reality found in the heart of somatic psychology: Charles Darwin formulated it over a hundred years ago.

Two nervous impulses standardize our movements: the first originates in the cerebral cortex directing itself down, known as the alpha nerve that

¹⁶⁷The Biosynthesis Concept of the Motoric Fields in Energy and Character, vol. 30/2, April 2000, Abbotsbury Publications, England

*supplies the voluntary muscles with directed signals to perform actions. We can speak about the alpha system calling it an **action system**. The second nervous impulse originates in the base of the brain directing itself down and is known as a gamma nerve: through cellular fibers it gives signals to the muscle to place itself in the appropriate tonus: we can call this second system a **prompt system**. The prompt system is intimately related to mood and intention. Without compromising the voluntary action, our posture can communicate with our internal attitude and feelings in certain situations. We can disconnect the attitude from the tendency for movement. In the attitude we see a quite motionless form that reflects an inhibited movement. The shoulders are kept raised and the retracted pelvis is kept backwards, unable to swing. The head turned to the side can always avoid a blow. On the other hand, in the tendency for movement, we can see the beginning of a standardized action. The shoulders suggests a hint "to give a shrug", the pelvis starts to flirt, the head moves forward like a speaker ready to open his mouth and announce his presence to a group of people. The conditional movement overlaps the involuntary or spontaneous, in the same way that the conscientious mind overlaps the unconscious. Working with movement impulses and allowing spontaneous changes of form are, therefore, a way of contacting the unconscious without using words as a primary tool. Eight of the motor fields are united in four groups of two. The ninth motor field is not grouped for reasons that will be clarified later. When describing each field I will try to give an idea of its importance and synergetic development, its relation with the emotional expression, its extreme or insufficient emphasis in certain types of character conditioning and its effectiveness in therapy work.*

A.4.1.1 The Flexion field



The foetus in the uterus gradually moves in a field of bending of the entire body during the last stages of pregnancy. The foetal position resonates in states of regression and represents a desire to remove itself from the world into a state of greater security, such as that of the uterus¹⁶⁸. Many adults return to this as their preferred position for sleeping.

The fields of bending in the legs may represent a system of protection and defence for the abdomen. The yoga position in which the person crouches far down, with legs flexed and their head on the floor is called the child's pose. The hand's field of flexion is best seen in the child's grip reflex, which is strong enough to support its entire weight following birth. The field of bending of the arms is an auto-nutritive position, where the child withdraws inside himself or into a favourite toy during times of loneliness or insecurity.

In emotional expression a person may flex himself in a sheltered position as if he were hugging himself, when cold or when he needs to recover his energy instead of spending it. Stanley Keleman calls this the "self recuperation" position. He may also have a self-preservation or self-protection function, as in the position assumed during a fall in judo.

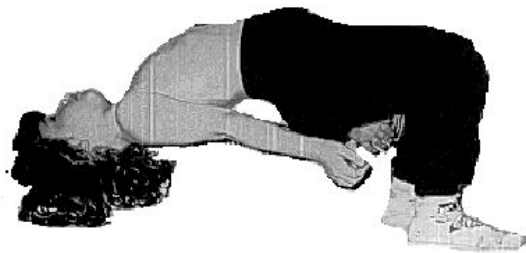
In situations of great fear, the legs may bend themselves up to the chest, the arms extended over the chest, while the walls of the stomach are firmly contracted in the direction of the back, towards the spine. Boadella calls this the foetal fear reflex, since the first time this occurs it looks like the

¹⁶⁸ Boadella, David, *Correntes da Vida*, ED. Summus, São Paulo, SP, Brasil, 1988.

bending over of the foetus, aware of the negative messages travelling along the umbilical chord. The bending of the head to the chest is, on the one hand, the position of Rodin's "Thinker", and on the other, frequently found in people in states of desperation or depression.

This motor field frequently occurs when a person is categorically identified as being in a state of depression or desperation, or has a very strong fear of anxiety. However, when the person is negating the fear, is prepared against collapse or is refusing to show any neediness, it may be predominantly avoided.

A.4.1.2 The Field of Extension



In extension, the body is moved in the opposite manner to flexion. The spine curves backwards, the legs are stretched, the arms are enlarged and sit further away from the body, and the head is lifted up, far from the body.

Following nine months in the uterus, being born is an enormously tiring event in itself. A number of doctors or nurses have the habit of holding the newborn baby by its ankles, suspended upside down, which is a very severe field of extension for whoever has just been through a birth.

The first moves to walk take place before the child is strong enough to stand up. The legs are just stretched out to their limit, practicing movements which will be used for their locomotion later. Kicking is a form of extension. The child moves with his arms in space in order to explore what sort of world exists outside the uterus.

Therapists working with clients who are under enormous emotional pressure, but who resist giving in to an expression of rage for example, may extend their spine in such a way that it takes the position known medically as 'opisthotonus'. The pre-Freudians, in the days of Charcot, called this the 'arc de cercle', and saw it occurring in manifestations of hysteria. The body is supported only in the head and in the ankles. It is an extreme form of support, but also repeats the bending arch of birth. Breathing may also be held captive quite significantly.

If breathing is liberated and the body is allowed to move into this position, it becomes a powerful means of expressing feelings which are extremely powerful in terms of anger or distress. In his Bio-energetic work, Alexander Lowen developed the use of strong tolerated extension, but here we are talking about natural arching of the spine as a means of expressing one's mobility and elasticity.

We can distinguish between 3 different expressions for the arms' motor fields: stretching which involves a great extension into space, involving the feeling of freedom and power. The movements involved in yawning possess some of these qualities and opening the mouth is a very good example of the field of extension, in which the body experiences stretching reflexes which deepen breathing.

The second extension is found in reaching out: here the person extends his arms for human contact, in order to hold or to hug. The emotional feeling is related to giving and receiving and is entirely different to the sensation felt in stretching.

We can see a third form of extension in opening the arms. This is a delicate exploration that is sensitive to the space beyond the heart, in which the person enters into contact with very delicate beams in the arms and fingers and becomes conscious of the energy field (the so-called 'aura') extending outside the body.

A.4.1.3 The Field of Traction



The field of traction is found mainly in the arms. The gripping reflex evolved as part of pulling when the child learns to raise objects in opposition with gravity, and pull himself in trying to get up by gripping a chair or a table. He may also become attached to a much-loved object which someone has wanted to take from his hands. The game of 'Tug-of-War' is a pure example of the field of pulling.

We can distinguish between the passive and active fields of pulling. In the passive form, the person holds on with her hands against the pulling of another. She is stretched by the pulling of another. The pulling therefore is combined with extension. Or she actively pulls the other in her direction against resistance: pulling is therefore combined with flexing.

The emotional feeling is: I want you, give it to me. Gripping, holding tight and keeping someone as something that belongs to him are key themes. For a person who is greedy and manipulative in his basic way of reacting to the world, the field of pulling is part of his character. But for the person whose need to hold onto himself is either developed or negated, it is necessary to develop contact with the need to pull.

When the need to pull is used therapeutically, it has a series of effects: it is particularly important in situations of abandonment and collapse, where the person lost contact with the power of his back as an axis of support for the satisfaction of basic needs. Sometimes he may be standing between two people holding hands and supporting him by his back. The person to be worked with is asked to walk backwards gently pulling the resistance of his partner forward. It is a tug-of-war in which what is helping concedes and gradually relinquishes its “ground”.

A.4.1.4 The Field of Opposition



The Field of Opposition is the opposite to that of pulling. Where the latter is expressed in pulling, the first is developed in pushing. The first field of opposition is associated with the head of the foetus in proportion to him pushing it against the base of the pelvis, striking against it as if it were a trampoline. When the movements of stretching the legs make contact with the surface resistance of the ground, the baby pushes them against gravity in such a way as to stay on his feet. Before this, lying on his stomach, his hands push the ground away as a means of supporting his head so as to explore the world from this position before starting to crawl.

The field of opposition, as the name suggests, has to do with the right to say no and with establishing limits. It recognizes the right to defend each person's personal space and keep intruders and invaders at a distance.

For an angry, psychopathic type of person, who fears manipulation all the time, this quality of pushing what you don't want away is highly developed. Every touch can appear to be an invasion which needs to be immediately forced away. For this type of person, the field of opposition will be in his character, and other fields will be more useful in therapeutic work. But for people who have learnt to let go of their limits and succumb to invasion without protesting, it is essential to practice and develop the field of opposition. This includes people inundated with anxiety as well as people who were suffocated by over protective mothers when they were children.

There are numerous ways of developing this field. On foot, back to back and leaning against the partner who is supporting you, and therefore moving slowly against the resistance, firstly backwards, then forwards, develops the field of opposition in the back. Being face to face with arms open, and with the palms of the hands against those of your partner, clearly establishes the limit between the two personal spaces. The field can also be used extremely effectively with one lying on his back with his feet supported against the thighs of the one who is working.

With intense anxiety, a person may be helped to sit with his legs bent and with his back against someone who is helping, whose hands are also available to be pushed outward. This simultaneously mobilizes the limits of the back, arms and legs and may quickly and reliably bring a person out of an imprisoning sense of anxiety. The fields of opposition also afford a great deal of restraint for people whose assertion needs to find limits.

A.4.1.5 The Field of Rotation

The child usually rotates during birth. Special muscles called "rotating" are located along the length of the spine. The action of traveling, with the alternation of the balance from left to right, is a type of rotational pulse.

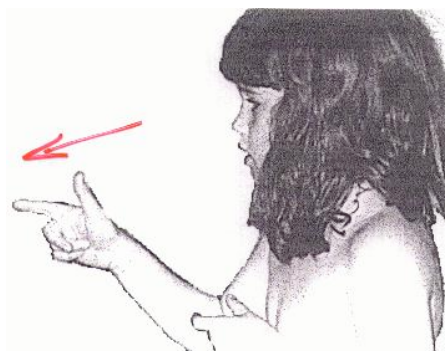
The legs are equipped with muscles for inversion and reversal, the arms with pronators and supinators, in both cases in order for them to rotate forwards and backwards.

Revolving movements explore the spaces to the sides of the body's main axis. Children enjoy spinning and twirling around. The matador shows the ability of rotating so as to avoid the bull. People who practice aikido make the flow of spiralling rotating movement the central point of their art.

Rotation can be used to explore unknown paths on the periphery of the main highway. These side paths are advantageous when we encourage linear compulsive people to change their direction and create well established paths ahead for themselves. But for those people with hysterical tendencies, changing the path is a key characteristic to their character: the rotational field serves to defend, to distort and scatter themselves and turn on their side or spin away from direct confrontations.

When the therapist is using the field of rotation, for those for whom it is suggested, he will attract impulses for unilateral movements and encourage asymmetry, aiding the person develop the flexibility to turn and roll over. This can be very useful in releasing the inflexibility at the base of the spine in those with stiff backs, or he can take an arm and gently stretch it out in front of the body: this is an active induction made by the therapist in the passive rotation of the client.

A.4.1.6 The Field of Channelling



While the field of rotation moves out of the body's central line of the body or a limb, the field of channelling is extremely linear and focused. The actions flow directly out from the centre of the body like the spokes of a wheel. A child learns to direct its movements, to look directly at you, to point at a toy or food which it wants. The channelling field is related to a purpose and its emotional quality is serious, committed and directed to an end.

For hyper-objective people with obsessive tendencies and tunnel vision, this is the preferred field that keeps them in character. They would better be helped with rotation or pulsation. But with people with little focus, hypo-limited and easily dispersive, those who find difficulty in focusing their attention and committing themselves to an action or decision, the channelling field can be of great benefit.

The therapist encourages the client to explore directed movements which are incisive and highly focused. This can be so subtle as to ask for direct visual contact, instead of a distant gaze, or as total as the contained commitment before a karate chop.

A.4.1.7 The Field of Activation



Locomotion is travelling. It normally involves active movements of the arms and legs as in walking, swimming, running and jumping. Activity prepares the person to move themselves somewhere relatively quickly.

The foetus undertakes swimming movements inside the uterus and can swim before he or she can even crawl or stand up. Once a child has mastered the art of crawling, she can become incredibly active. Before this she practices patterns of activity in the form of quickly kicking her legs and thrashing her arms about. In the field of activity, vitalization is the key theme, not the plan or the particular direction of movement. Some people's lives are extremely hyper-active: relaxation is torture for them. For these sort of people, activity is in their character, they are always on the go and don't know where to start.

People with more depressive tendencies feel inert for hours and do not manage to initiate anything. Their metabolism is low and their speed is a foreign attribute. For these people, mobilizing the field of activity can be the key to pulling themselves out from under the weight of depression.

Running and dancing or jumping are not easily compatible with the picture of a mental depressive. But how do you help someone whose metabolism is slow. Walk faster? One way is to ask him to make any sort of little movement quickly, as if it were a demonstration, or make a gesture of surprise or an unexpected action. Another way is to ask him to do an activity slowly, something like walking slowly without leaving the spot, and gradually

help him to increase the rhythm until a fast walk becomes a jog, which could suddenly become an explosion of energy in the legs - surprising no one as much as the one who is running.

A.4.1.8 The Field of Absorption



The child remains quiet, absorbed by the movement of a leaf on the breeze, or she relaxes on her front in a state of semi-trance. She is guided to receive impressions, to immobilize her external activity and maximize her internal perception.

For some people, relaxing and absorbing becomes a secondary life style which is used to replace activity and initiative.

However, for a hyper-active person, the opposite is true: she yearns for this in order to be able to relax, to absorb and to reduce the rhythm. The field of absorption is the least dramatic of all the fields. Someone asks another to simply do nothing, that they allow themselves not to take things so seriously, that they experience their own interior world as a source of being, instead of being the centre of action.

A.4.1.9 The Field of Pulsation

The heart of the foetus starts beating 21 days after conception. The body has various pulses. One key pulse related to the emotional state is the rhythm of breathing which starts immediately after birth. The circumstances of the birth have a powerful influence on our breathing habits. At the first inhalation starts life, and on the last it ends. Each in-breath forms nourishment, containment, and develops a role. Each out-breath furthers

expression, release and a certain level of relaxation and discharge, be it strong or gentle. Some people emphasize their inhalation more than their exhalation: they are repressed or restrained. Others emphasize the exhalation more: they are expressive, untied, relieved. The spectre of containment and liberty is one of the most basic rhythms to our lives.

The motor fields work with the soul of the muscle. They express patterns of latent intent. They form the cornerstone of the affection-motor scheme which are so basic to our development. They unite movement with breathing and movement to feeling and can be used to construct a new body image reflecting the potential of response adaptable to environmental stress and to experience the joy of living. They are the heart of our non-verbal communication, our system of bodily semantics, which we can neglect when in danger, taking into account that they consist of approximately 80% of our signalling in all our face-to-face relations.

A.4.2 David Smith and David Boadella's character types

As regards character, David Smith¹⁶⁹ and David Boadella¹⁷⁰ developed an interesting overview where we can see more clearly how the character relates to the other, giving a new meaning to the inter-relation by its projection.

The interesting view here, and the difference between Boadella and Lowen as regards character, is that for Lowen, the definition of character is static and for Boadella it lies in movement.

The “meaning” of the relationships are formed out of the movement between the people involved, so depending on the movement and

¹⁶⁹ Smith, David, *Movement and Character*, Energy and Character, Vol. 9, n° 2, May, Abbotsbury Publications, Dorset, England, 1978

¹⁷⁰ Boadella, David, *Maps of Character*, Energy and Character, vol. 8, n° 2, Abbotsbury Publications, Dorset, England, 1977

expressions of the parents, the children answer in counter response to the parents, creating new expressive and somatic meanings, that can be positive or negative, traumatic or not, integrative or not.

The fact is that for the character's formation one must go through that relationship, and it is within that relationship that we develop neurotic and psychotic defences as well as healthy defences in order to cope with life. The "meanings" of life come out of our first relationships as a basis, some stay definitely; others come and go from time to time. The "somatic posture" is directly connected with these meanings and it can be an external as well as an internal posture that fits into the body/soul¹⁷¹ relationship of one person.

Smith describes 4 character patterns:

- a. Characters that seem to move TOWARDS the world – the oral dependent and passive-feminine patterns.
- b. Characters that seem to move AGAINST the world - the paranoid and phallic patterns.
- c. Characters that seem to move AWAY from the world – schizoid and hysterical patterns.
- d. Ambivalent characters that seem to be stuck BETWEEN movements – the masochistic and obsessive patterns.

Each of these four main patterns has a uniquely characteristic way of relating to 'bad' objects in the world as an infantile defence against invasion or deprivation of contact. In the same paper David Smith describes a characteriological model based on three polarized movement-dimensions formulated by Rudolf Laban¹⁷². These three dimensions are the horizontal dimension (polarity: open/closed); the sagittal dimension (polarity: advancing/retreating); and the vertical dimension (polarity: undergrounded/overgrounded). As Smith describes these their movement

¹⁷¹ Soul here is connected to where we find life.

¹⁷² Laban, Rudolf, *The mastery of movement*, MacDonald and Evans, London, 1960

polarities can be combined in eight ways to describe the eight major character patterns in the following way:

- Open, retreating and undergrounded describes the schizoid pattern;
- Closed, advancing and undergrounded: the paranoid pattern;
- Open, advancing and undergrounded: the oral dependent pattern;
- Closed, retreating and undergrounded: the masochistic pattern;
- Open, advancing and overgrounded: the passive feminine pattern;
- Closed, retreating and overgrounded: the obsessive pattern;
- Open, retreating and overgrounded: the hysterical pattern.
- Closed, advancing and overgrounded: the phallic pattern.

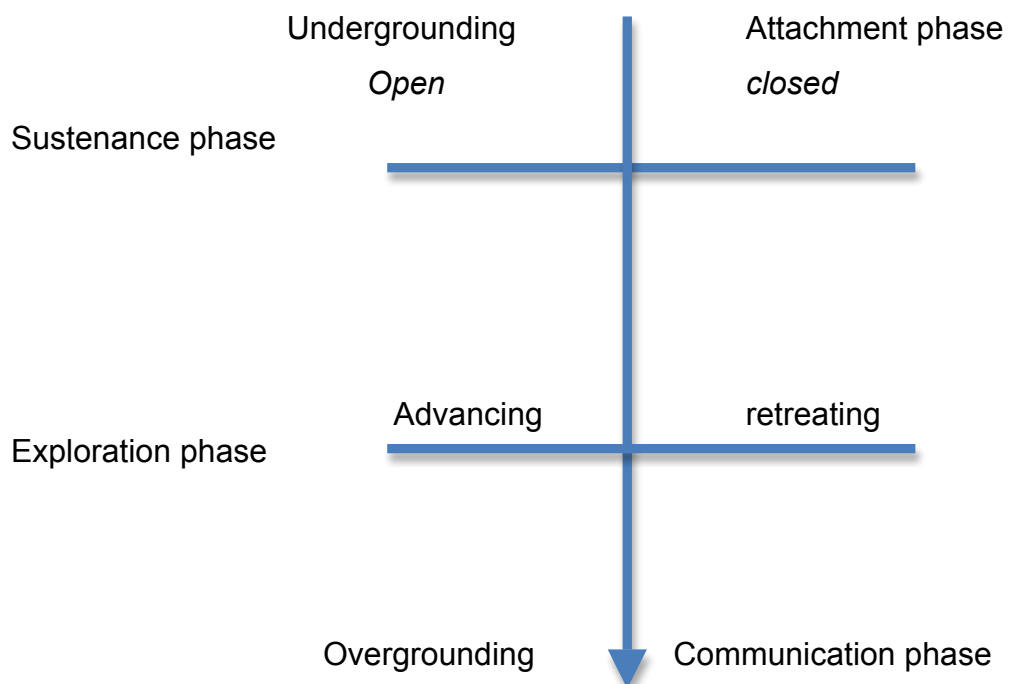
There is a dialectic-phenomenological model based on the principles of identity and antithesis. The schizoid and phallic patterns, for example, are antithetical on all three movement-dimensions, they are total opposites in terms of movement patterns, while the schizoid and the hysterical patterns are identical on two dimensions (both are open and retreating) and antithetical on one dimension (the schizoid pattern is undergrounded and the hysterical pattern is overgrounded).

Smith correlates the three movement dimensions with three of the four developmental stages described by David Boadella in *Stress and Character Structure*¹⁷³. Smith affirms that these correlations were not speculative or analogical but were based on the movement possibilities available to the child during these phases. Boadella's phases are:

¹⁷³ Boadella, David, *Stress and Character Structure*, Energy and Character, Abbotsbury Publications, Vol. 5, n° 3, Dorset, England, 1974

PHASE	PRIMARY RIGHT	MOVEMENT
1. Attachment undergrounded	Right to exist	vertical
2. Sustenance closed	Right to nourishment	horizontal open and closed
3. Exploration and retreating	Right to explore	saggital advancing
4. Communication overgrounded	Right to communicate	vertical

We therefore have a basic table that can be adapted to each character, as we can see below:



1. THE SCHIZOID POSITION

or you can 'map' this on the diagram:

You can get a feel of this position physically by letting yourself feel helplessly open; let your arms open wide, your mouth and eyes also. Act as though you are flopping about and feeling like running away from everyone and everything. A common experience is to rush to your bed, curl up in a foetal position and cry helplessly. This is probably moving towards the schizoid position. If you feel very undergrounded (a pathological term equivalent to horizontal grounding) you may experience a sense of de-personalisation, loss of identity and feelings of bodily disintegration.

At root is some threat to your right to exist. This could be emotional, physical, or intellectual. The solution that is attempted is to move *Away* from the threat; you can think of it as an 'Away' solution.

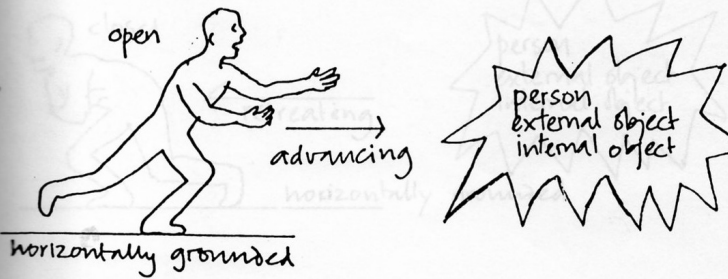
2. THE PARANOID POSITION

or diagrammatically:

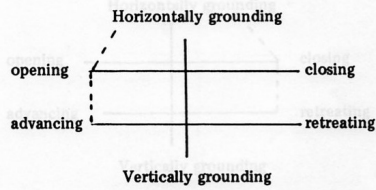
We all get into this position from time-to-time. Often this is a rational reaction to realistic danger. If the room you are in is actually surrounded with snipers waiting to shoot you, then you may well feel paranoid. Physically you feel closed up and tight, pulling in your musculature, and in a panicked way, you advance wildly to attack those people or things that seem dangerous and threatening.

Again, the right to exist is threatened, but this time the solution is to go frantically *Against* the dangers, i.e. it is an 'Against solution' to a threat to existence.

3. THE ORAL POSITION

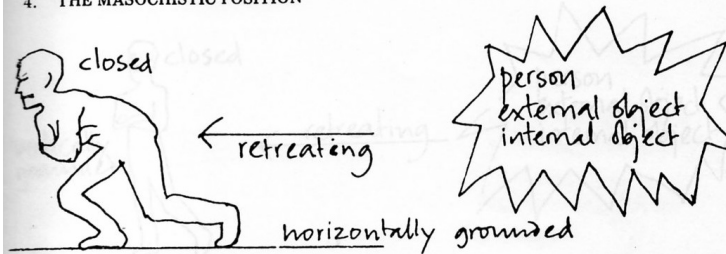


diagrammatically:

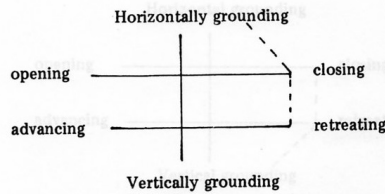


In the Oral position you advance hungrily to the other for sustenance, clinging on to them for dear life. The sustenance can literally be food or it can be a desire for emotional, sexual or intellectual sustenance. It is a response to frustration of the right to sustenance. The solution is to move *towards* people in a 'positive' way to gain sustenance. In its pathological form, you never get satisfaction no matter how much nurturance is received.

4. THE MASOCHISTIC POSITION

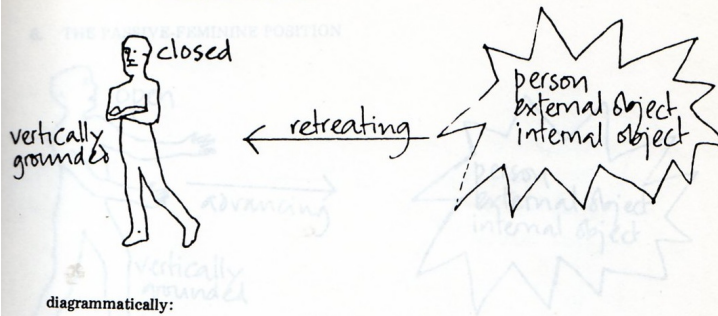


diagrammatically:

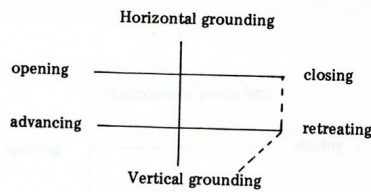


In this position you feel stuck between love and hate, desire and fear. This leaves you in retreat but often it takes the form of self-hate and self-recriminations with feelings of spite at the world. In extremis it leads to the *depressive* position of feeling in a black cloud of immobilising and guilty feelings. Because of the 'stuck' nature of the feelings we can call it a between solution, i.e. stuck between contradictory feelings, desires or actions. The right to explore (anal) may be under threat.

5. THE OBSESSIONAL POSITION

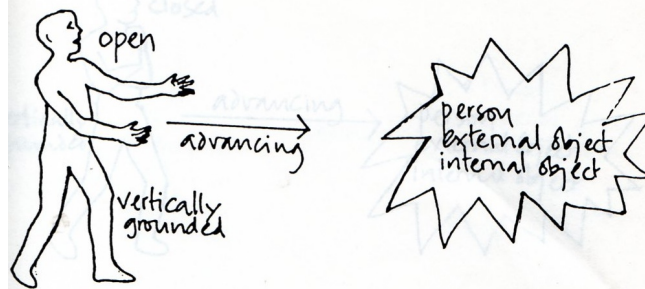


diagrammatically:

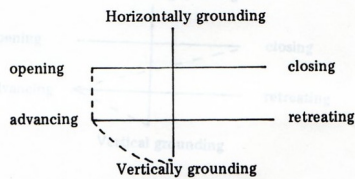


The obsessional position is similar to the Masochist position above except that you feel rigidly and stiffly into the vertically grounded movement. It is typical to rush manically into ineffective activity in order to avoid the stuck feelings below the surface. So although you seem incredibly busy and fussy and may appear to be going towards or against people, you are really in retreat or 'stuck'. It is a different kind of 'Between' solution. If circumstances cause you to panic, then you may 'flip' into the horizontal position, i.e. the masochist position. This is a common flip and sometimes the positions alternate and are called 'manic-depressive'.

6. THE PASSIVE-FEMININE POSITION



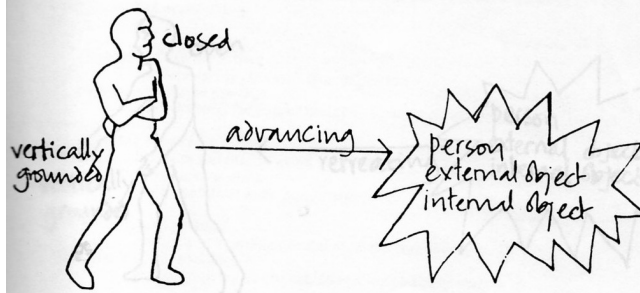
diagrammatically:



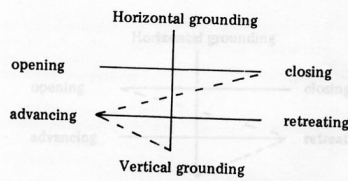
The traditional name for this position is very misleading, but we use it because it links up with other clinical work. It can be a very active position and is as common a position amongst men as amongst women.

In this position you advance to give nurturing and succouring to others. In a pathological form it is a compulsive need to serve others and ignore your own needs and rights. In crisis you may become horizontally grounded and thus a typical 'flip' would be into the Oral position. So it can be that normally you are compulsively giving and then you flip into compulsively demanding support and nurturing. In either case, this is still a *Towards* solution.

7. THE PHALIC POSITION

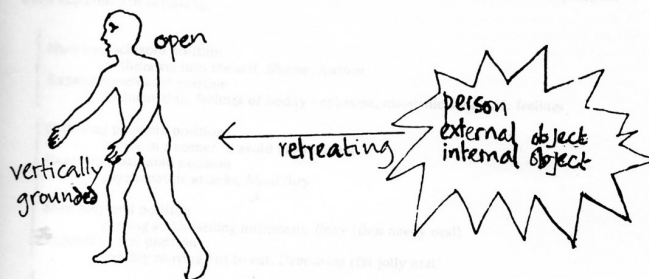


diagrammatically:

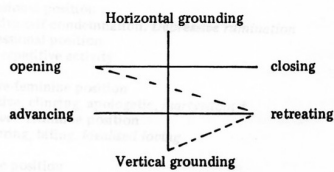


The phallic position is one where you advance to master and control the other. It is a pushy 'Against' pattern, and is associated with the traditional male although the pattern appears also in women. Under crisis where you 'flip' into the horizontal grounding position it leads to the Paranoid position.

8. THE HYSTERICAL POSITION



diagrammatically:



In the hysteric position you rush towards people and then if they respond you are threatened and rush away. There is often a highly sexualised tone to relations. In some circumstances, actual physical symptoms appear (conversion symptoms). If you, in crisis, 'flip' into the horizontal grounding position this would be the 'schizoid' position. This is a very big flip indeed and accounts for the enormous energy one can bring to bear in order not to experience such a flip.

This position is also an 'Away' solution.

A.5 John Pierrakos - Core Energetics Psychotherapy

John Pierrakos was a doctor and psycho-therapist who was born in Greece on February 8, 1921. He is the founder of Core Energetics Evolutionary Therapy, was a student of and collaborator with Wilhelm Reich, and co-founder of Bio-energetic Analysis. Together with Eva Pierrakos, his wife, he took part in the creation of Pathwork, a path to spiritual self-understanding. From his experience in Psychiatry, Bioenergetics and Pathwork, Core Energetics arose. He died in New York in February 2001. The following bodily representations were born from his research.

Dr. Pierrakos was an important researcher during the first years of Bioenergetics with Dr. Alexander Lowen. When he took the way to Core Energetics he created a new vision of human development that became part of the body psychotherapy history and created lots of disciples around the world. We will have a very brief look on the images representatives of human auras connected to their character development and the blocks created by "education" and contact with culture. If one is interested in more details should go to his book published in several languages.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Pierrakos, John, *Core Energetics: Developing the capacity to love and heal*, 1987 Life Rhythm, New York, NY, USA

A.5.1 AURA¹⁷⁵, ENERGY FIELDS¹⁷⁶ AND BODIES

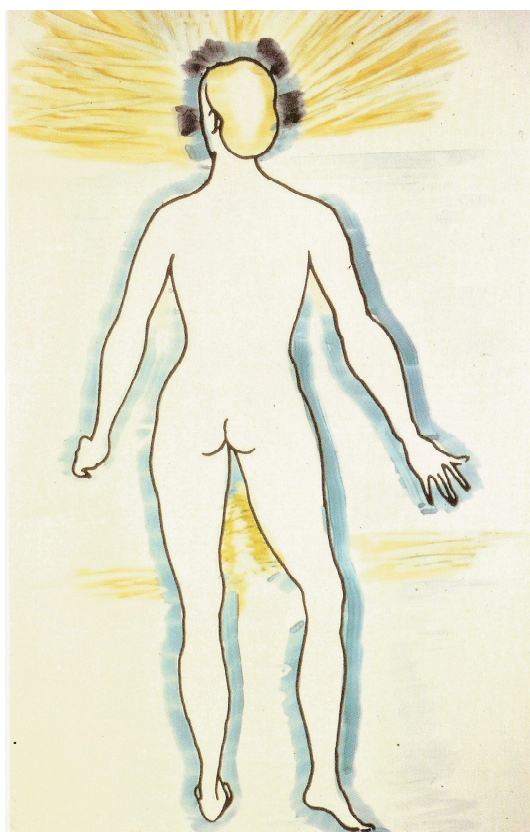


Fig. 6 The Human Aura (appears in various individual forms)



Fig. 7 The Human Aura (side view)

¹⁷⁵ Aura is the energetic field that pulsates around the body of a human being and that can be seen with special filters or by an appropriate eye. The distortions of the aura are an important indicator to the diagnostic in the treatment Dr. Pierrakos proposes that he calls treatment of the essence. From Pierrakos, John, *Core Energetics: Developing the capacity to love and heal*, 1987 Life Rhythm, New York, NY, USA on page 278, glossary.

Essence is the inner reality of human beings, the source of positive energy that, if not distorted, serves as a harmonic function.

¹⁷⁶ Energetic field is the energetic configuration that pulsates around the human body and other entities, alive or inertes. Each entity has its own characteristic vibration under the condition where they are.

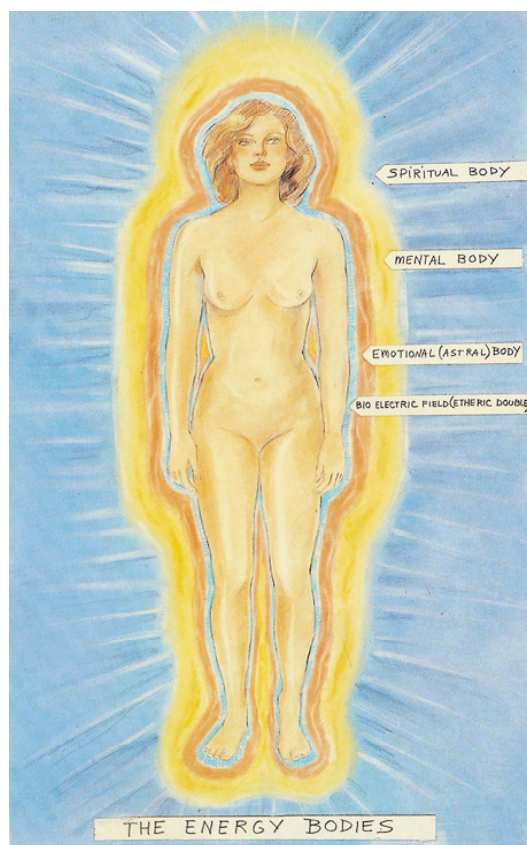




Fig. 12 Normal Structure

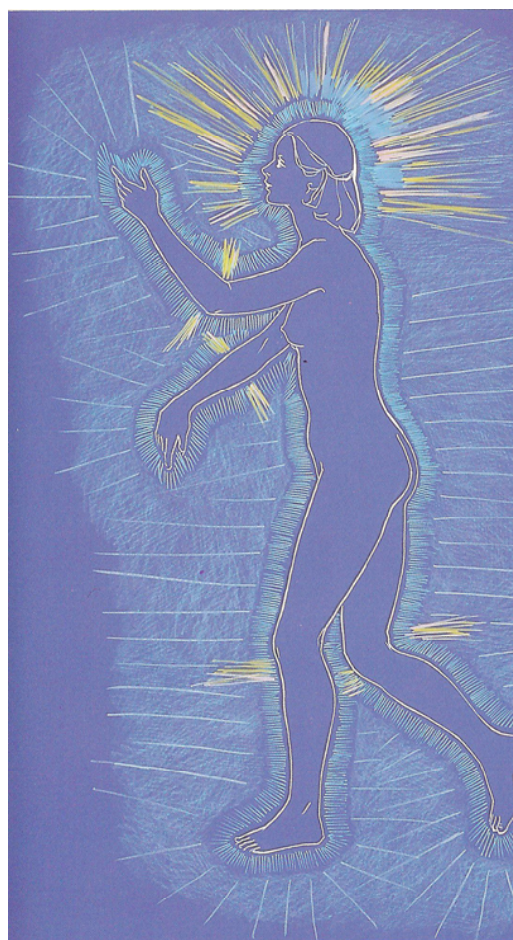


Fig. 12 Normal Structure

In these representative figures Pierrakos shows the normal energetic structure. For him the normal structures have energy centres expanding from inside out with a balanced distribution of energy around the body. He suggests that the expression of the aura exactly shows the inner conditions of the organism: in the solid body - the postures of the bone structure, the state of the muscles and the soft tissues; in the emotions - the flow of the vital forces related to inner and outer stimulus; and in the mind - the perceptions, the concepts of thought, and the decisions that drive the action and reactions of the whole. In this way, the aura shows the systemic implications of a sickness, whatever the main symptoms: physical disturbances, emotional unbalance or deformed thoughts.¹⁷⁷ From this point of view, Pierrakos developed the following patterns of defences caused by pain and suffering,

¹⁷⁷ Pierrakos, John, *Core Energetics: Developing the capacity to love and heal*, 1987 Life Rhythm, New York, NY, USA

that distort the normal energetic dynamic in a chronic defensive frozen way. A defensive pattern it is not a definition of the person, but simply a defence that possibly dominates behaviour in several situations. For Pierrakos what defines the person is his "essence"; something that is beyond defences and kept deep inside the person for protection. Let's have a look at the energetic character formation that became an icon, a symbol for them, serving as a diagnostic and definition for behaviour:

A.5.2 The Oral energetic structure:

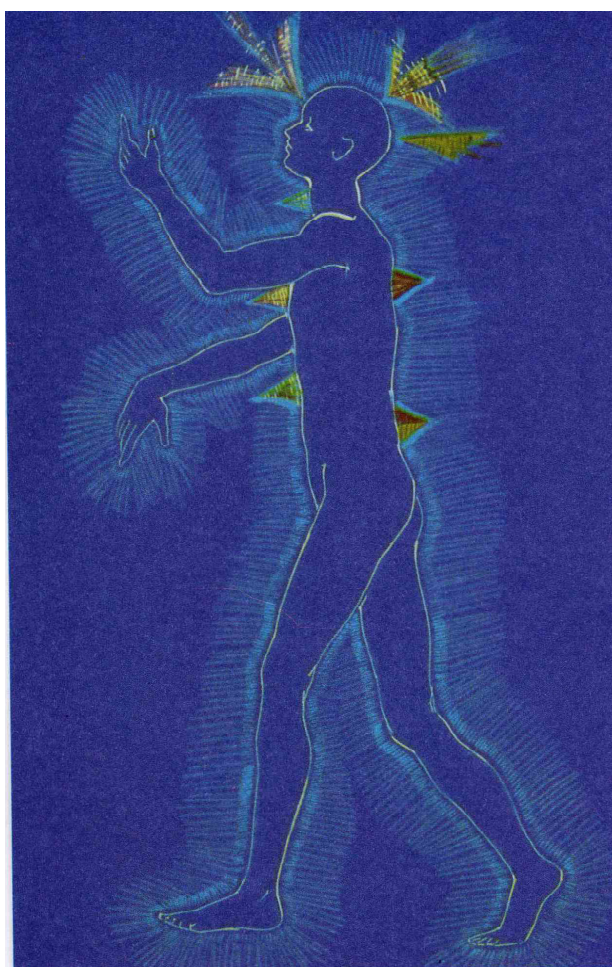


Figura 13. Estrutura oral

The figure above represents the energetic field of an oral character person. If compared with the considered normal energy structure, the energetic centres appear in the illustration with inverted "mouths", looking at the skin, to indicate a dysfunction. As we can see, the oral figure shines weakly, as a result of the systemic sub-charge. The blocks appear in the

occipital area, in the throat, back of the neck and especially in the shoulders that usually remain upwardly tense, in an expression of deep anxiety. The energy centre of the forehead is well developed and the eyes are shining and fully charged. The funnel at the coccyx is inverted, diminishing the sexual discharge. The cones over the heart and the throat are in a bad state. The solar plexus also remains blocked but sometimes opens allowing the energy out asymmetrically. The organism is a like an empty sack, absorbing forces through the mouth but being unable to metabolize them. The body develops in a long, thin form, lacking tone in the muscles. This would be how Pierrakos would "iconize" the somatic postures of the oral character.

A.5.3 The Schizoid energetic structure:



Fig. 15 Schizoid Structure

The blocks of the schizoid structure, as we can see in the figure above, appear "grouped", as if they were separate compartments of a pomegranate, cultivated out of past experiences. Many interruptions change the involucreum,

especially in the joints of the torso and the extremities, whilst the major blocks are located in the back of the neck. The radial forms on the back appear to be piled up and dishevelled. As the oral person, the schizoid might have the crown funnel, at the top of the head quite open. The throat funnel is very much inverted and the heart funnel and sexual centres quite diminished. The posterior cones of absorption are depleted, making the person lose any sort of integrated assertive expression.

A.5.4 The psychopathic energetic structure :



Fig. 16 Psychopathic/Aggressive Structure

The conflicting relations of childhood end up aggregating in blocks which slow down movement in the genital area and dislocate energy to the area above the waist in the direction of the head, as can be seen in the illustration below. The aggressive expression of the personality, projected

from the back, becomes extremely exaggerated, and the pelvis and hips are passive and contracted. The strongest blocks appear in the inferior part of the body, around the belly and the groin, in the buttocks and the lower back. The shoulders can become very armoured. The heart centre is closed, as is the throat funnel. The solar plexus has little or no force.

A.5.5 The masochistic energetic structure:

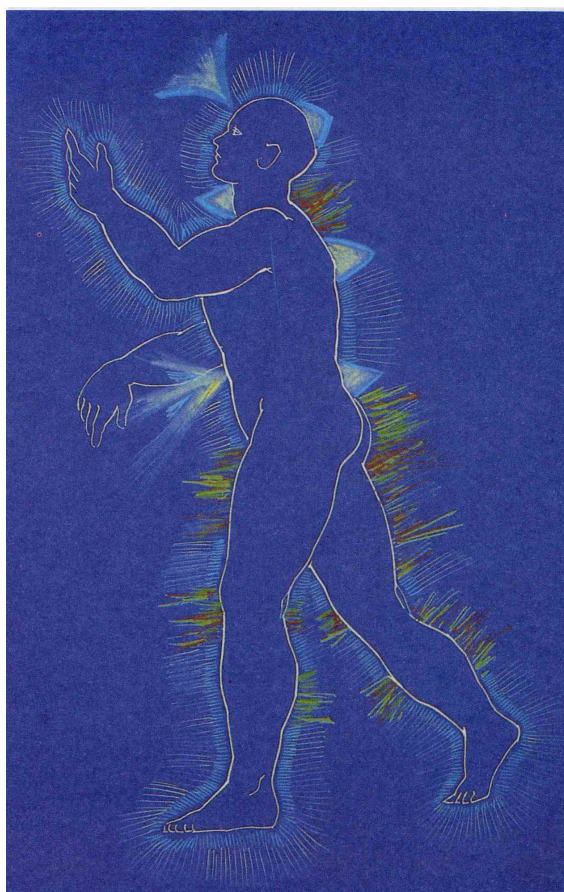


Figura 14. Estrutura masoquista

The masochist contrasts with the oral character. The most perceptible characteristic, as we can see in illustration, is the exterior layer of the person that suffocates the inner self or 'core', as Pierrakos call it. Because of this over charge, the ego constantly fights to conquer space and put away the occlusion that he feels against his own defences. The armour of the masochist shows strong blocks in the superior part of the torso and the thighs.

The energy accumulates in the shoulders and the back, interfering in the centrifugal movement that should occur through the front of the body damaging mainly the receptive funnel of the throat. The buttocks and the groin, are far more blocked than the thorax region, as are the knees and thighs. The throat funnel, instead of receiving, put the energy away, thus changing the form of the mandible. We can also see an open mind to the world and an open belly for emotions and affection.

A.5.6 The rigid energetic structure :



Fig. 17 Rigid Structure

This structure is characterized by the capacity to organize and control the environment, to look successful, but is distanced from the feelings of the heart. Maybe it is the more coercive character. Usually this character has a

harmonic and balanced energetic movement as we can see in the figure above. The energetic field moves vigorously in contraction and expansion. The specific location of the blocks depends on the processes of formation. Some have armour around the shoulders, projecting the back backwards. The aura can be deformed at the base of the back. Because of the resistance to receiving, the funnels of the throat and heart show themselves as being inverted or distorted. The rest of the body shows strength and openness in their main points of energetic communication.

Section 3

Possible Connections between Body Psychotherapy and Semiotic Meanings

1. Intersubjectivity and semiosis

As we can see from the results of the work of the researchers above, the body gains qualities of form that go beyond genetics, i.e., depending on the influence of parents, education and relationships. Our mothers and fathers shape our brains and bodies from the inside out in a dance of interacting instincts.¹⁷⁸ Babies survive on the abilities of their carers to detect their needs and intentions.

In psychotherapy those relationships are intersubjective, from one to another. For the newborn the mother is the first subject and object. Once the child is growing other subjects and objects participate with great importance in their lives, creating new intersubjectivities that will help in the shaping of brains and bodies from birth.

In semiotics, there must first be differentiation in the relationship before there is growth of the self. This differentiation is the basis for sense formation. This thesis is trying to show that semiosis starts to happen from early infancy, and that the body learns to differentiate, or the body differentiates very soon, through its affect-motorics expressions and sensibilities, before and during the formation of consciousness.

During the other phases of development: childhood, adolescence and adulthood the forces of intersubjectivity stay more and more activated, bringing into the scene more intersubjectivities and together more semiosis.

The development of the intersubjectivity, for good or bad runs together with sense formation as we could see in the first two chapters. We could see the importance and the presence of subjectivity and intersubjectivity in the relationships for the formation of a person. The process of subjectification goes together with psychic development.

¹⁷⁸ Cozolino, Louis, *The Neuroscience of Human Relationships*, W.W.Norton & Company, Inc, New York, NY, USA, 2006

From one perspective, it appears natural to look at the place where our real experience takes place and also empirically observe the process through which the “sense” (meaning) gains shape: in the ontogeny of the individual. In other words, the development of a new born child is not only a place in which we can see the formation of the sense process, it is also the good place where these processes are effectively accessible to our observation, and this point of view constitutes a privileged and irreplaceable observatory.

The second reason forming the basis of our choice is artfully theoretical: the processes of creating semiotics may only, in reality, be thought of together with the processes of subjectification; i.e. the processes with which the subject forms itself as such.

Subject and semiosis are terms which implicate and make demands of the other, presenting themselves as two faces of the same reality. It is impossible to devote oneself to the genesis of the sense without at the same time considering the processes which carry the formation of subjectivity, because there it makes no sense without the object; but from another perspective, this which makes up and founds subjectivity is precisely the ability to produce sense, or, that is, semiosis.¹⁷⁹

Over many years, researchers, through individual and group clinical experience, started to understand the mechanisms of development. They did not have the idea or opportunity, for example, to use videos to show and analyze what they saw, but they did have drawings and some pictures as we saw above.

The somatic posture of adult patients would relate to their childhood education and development, mainly according to the approach of the parents and the system they used to live in.

¹⁷⁹ Violi, Patrizia, *Distributed intersubjectivity semiosis: ontogenesis, consciousness and semiosis*, Dept. of Communication, UNIBO, Italy, 2008

Education therefore is quite a determinant for the future body posture¹⁸⁰ of a person, as we could see in the figures and examples above. We will see how some of those approaches work as a way of recovering the flow that becomes blocked through someone's education and how they create a new meaning through new intersubjectivity and a new memory for the person.

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The somatic posture of adult patients would relate to their childhood education and development, mainly according to the approach of the parents and the system they used to live in.

The meanings created by an invasive or deprived education are distorted by force and the first reaction is a defensive attitude by the body as a primary reaction.

The tensions created by this "education" become rigid either in the visceral, muscular or sensorial levels. This rigidity changes the natural format of the body, distorting the dynamic equilibrium of muscles, organs and senses.

This form is basically attached to the meanings derived from invasion and deprivation and, depending on the moral education, we can find common and particular influences that come from the emotional behaviour of humans who are quite similar all over the world but who have different qualities drawn from their different cultures. As a result, the same emotions have one

¹⁸⁰ Body posture automatically also relates to behaviour.

connotation in the East and another connotation in the West, which is different again in Africa and yet again in South America.

These qualities will carry implications in different character and somatic formations: for example the emotional distance and the respect for eye contact in Japan will form a certain emptiness in the chest and a lack of presence, which consequently leads to a sense of emotional deprivation. In Italy where the qualities of contact are quite the opposite to those in Japan, movement, attention and excessive eye contact will create a sense of constant invasion and the body form will be fuller than usual making it difficult to find space inside.

2. Body psychotherapy: an introduction by Stephen Johnson

Stephen Johnson, wrote in his book *Character Styles*¹⁸¹:

In personality disorders, there is usually a disruption in the flow of body, emotional, and other-person awareness into consciousness. The person is often dimly aware of herself in the body—mind connection.

She may be overly identified with her false self, for example, or unaware of her automatic propensity to avoid contact, or unaware of her ambivalent tendencies toward attachment. She often doesn't know herself as she relates to desires, motives, hostilities, ambivalence, etc. Her "emotional intelligence" is often quite impaired.

Relationships in the real world often reflect the internal difficulties described above. Such things as entitlement, splitting, part-object perceptions, grandiosity/worthlessness, and idealization/devaluation can severely disrupt adult relationships. In DSM IV, most Personality Disorder descriptions emphasize the factors described here. While it is quite an over-simplification, it is heuristic to note that those with personality disorders give both

¹⁸¹ Johnson, Stephen, *Character Styles*, W. Norton and Company, New York, NY, USA, 1994

themselves and others a lot of trouble. As one moves up the structural functioning continuum to Character Neurosis, the individual may still give himself a lot of trouble but, in general, he will create less pain for those around him.

Continuing with Johnson's observations that will lead to interaction:

"What makes people tick?" is very similar to the equally broad, important question "What is human nature?" It seems to me that developmental research and theory, in their essence, attempt to answer that question. Sustained watching of infants, babies, and children leads one to speculate about the essential nature of this being who is so initially helpless and potentially accomplished. Careful and often contrived observation is sometimes necessary to discover how already accomplished this little one really is. Theories are particularly useful in this endeavor to suggest the right questions.

What developmental theory and research have given us is an increasingly broad yet increasingly precise description of human nature. This particularly includes the kinds of needs humans must have met and the kinds of environments that must be provided to achieve human potential. Similarly, observations of children in development tell us what happens when these needs are chronically frustrated or when the needed environments are not provided. Again, the theories suggest what to look for and posit the most central relationships between early environment and resulting development.

I've always found the most fascinating application of this basic knowledge to involve answering the second question: "Why are we so crazy?" It is obvious that were it not for our craziness, there would be so much less suffering and destruction in the world. Humans solve problems far better than any other life-form but our craziness interferes profoundly with that process at every level. It is in the family, the workplace, and the politics of humankind that we see the colossal waste and pain of our proclivity for destructive dysfunctionality.

In answering the second question, I have found it particularly useful to study the most common patterns or syndromes in which our craziness expresses itself. These patterns are best described by those clinicians who have attempted to treat pathology. Among these, those who have described character structures, styles or disorders have often been the most astute. The resulting character syndromes have stood the test of time and clinical practice well and have done relatively well under the scrutiny of more systematic research. In their more extreme forms, these disorders of character or personality are widely used for diagnostic purposes around the world.

Now, here is the integration of two ways of knowing that help us to answer these questions. The studies of human development or human nature fit very nicely with the descriptions of the patterns of human craziness. Furthermore, these patterns don't just occur in the most severe form of mental illness. Such patterns are clearly documented in normal populations and in less severely pathological groups. I believe there are several useful continua of human dysfunction from the most to the least severe, which reflect quintessential building blocks of human nature. I believe I've found seven such building blocks around which personality and psychopathology are organized. There may be more.

Critical to any individual's adjustment on any of these continua is interaction. That interaction is between the individual, with his changing but basic needs, and the changing environment's ability to meet them. Such interaction makes personality and produces psychopathology. In an era when our most basic science, particle physics, asserts that matter itself is made of interaction, we are ripe to understand and experience our personality and our personal pathology as the product of interaction.

The interactional perspective in psychiatry is far from new. Fairbairn (1974 originally published 1952) and Guntrip (1968, 1971) are among its earliest, clearest, and most seminal contributors. These figures represent part of what has come to be known as the British School of Object Relations

Theory, which emphasizes the role of the parent-child relationship in the development of personality and psychopathology. There is a variation of psychoanalytic theory that emphasizes theoretically derived dimensions of child development and psychopathology based on early interactions.

3. What is Body Psychotherapy?

Many people used to ask this question - colleagues from other areas of psychotherapy, and non-professionals with a grounding in the wider area. As Stephen Johnson comments, the first associations we make involve specific techniques like those I showed in the last chapter. All of them are examples of body psychotherapy. However, those associations do not come close to telling the whole story.

In Johnson's own words:

I remember my attendance at the Congresses of both the American and European Body Therapy Associations. I recall who was there and what they did. In addition to those who represented very specific types of body psychotherapy, there were many others who represented and taught about a wide range of psychotherapeutic ideas.

Psychoanalysts, Martha Stark and Laurence Hedges were there. Neuroscientists, Alan Schore and Bessel van der Kolk were there. Child Development researchers, Edward Tronick and Annie Brook were on the program. Well known philosopher-therapists who embrace various active techniques were teaching and demonstrating (e.g. Alan Pesso, John Pierrakos and Ron Kurtz). Topics taught included borderline personality organization, transference and counter-transference, attachment theory, the therapeutic relationship, Gestalt Therapy, Yoga techniques, couple's therapy, and Object Relations. And I was there, invited to teach my synthesis of character and psychotherapy in its post-modern expression.

Clearly, this is not your father's "body psychotherapy." Perhaps the most distinctive part of each conference was the dance with a live band that each conference sponsored. I go to many conferences and such dances are unheard of. And, I noticed, these people can dance—even the northerners.

So, what is body psychotherapy? Well, we live in the post-modern era where complexity can be embraced and answers can be provisional—works in progress. I think it can be said that body psychotherapists are now more like other therapists than they are different. They are more secure than before—not needing to aggressively differentiate themselves or prove that they are better. They bring orientations to the therapeutic project that bear serious consideration.

Maybe, just as there is no such thing as a masochist, there is no longer any such thing as a body psychotherapist. Still, these body psychotherapists emphasize very valuable orientations. One of these is Body Awareness: The body therapist pays attention to her own body; she does embodied psychotherapy. She knows what and where she feels things. She can de-center from herself, and in an empathic state, she can feel much of what her client feels. At the same time, she can confidently "own" her own body, feel what she feels and represent that with a differentiated awareness. The "body psychotherapist" is also supremely cognizant of the client's body. He is aware of things like breathing, posture, movement-flow or block—eye contact, social distance, bodily tension, body armor, etc. He is thinking, yes, but he is also feeling, empathizing, relating, and ultimately, he is centered in his own somatic reality.

Finally, I would like to briefly catalogue four other basic orientations that body psychotherapists bring to the project. I will restrict the elaboration of these factors only because of constraints on the space that I am allowed to take here.

Focus on Affect: Body psychotherapists typically go directly for accessing and releasing emotion. They orient to the body blocks, the tension or

defensive armor that stops the natural flow of affect and promote the release of the underlying feelings. Many body therapy techniques pull directly for certain affects. For example, hitting and yelling elicit aggression, the eyes wide open together with the arms in a defensive posture, and deep breathing elicit fear, etc. These processes are then attached to elements of the internal world and external reality. There is now much research that confirms the efficacy of such processes (e.g.).

Grounding and Centering: Many body therapy techniques help people come “out of the head” and into “grounding in the body.” Breathing deeply, feet on the ground, legs energized, etc. all re-center the experience of the self in a more “grounded, body-centered” way.

Transforming the Abstract into the Concrete: I cherish how concrete are the body therapy processes. Boundaries are transformed into distance, pushing the other away or pulling them in, etc. Many core psychological principles are made concrete with these “body therapy” processes (e.g. trust, differentiation, self-activation, re-enactment of childhood dramas, traumas, etc.).

Body Focus as Altered State: For many of us, whose sense of self is typically located somewhere between the eyes, body therapy techniques bring our focus down to the body and the reality of affective experience. In doing this, they can elicit an altered state of consciousness. In this altered, hypnotic-like state, non-conscious, automatic learning becomes more possible.

To those I would add:

Transforming the concrete into abstract, and vice-versa, creating a dialogue between objective and subjective, intersubjectively.

Grounding, centring and "facing", as this is an important connection to the space and the environment between us.

Polarity is a very important concept because it gives you the extremes as well as the in-betweens.

The connections between childhood development and the updated life using techniques to recover meanings that belong and are necessary to keeping life flowing in movement.

4. Possible Connections between Body Psychotherapy and Semiotic Meanings

A psychotherapist was taking care of a young man of between fifteen and sixteen years old, who was diagnostic with hebephrenia. During the session the young man said to the psychotherapist: "I am not sure I exist". The therapist answered: "Of course you exist". The young man insisted: "You cannot be sure". The therapist continued: "I am sure you exist". The young man said: "How can you be sure?" The therapist: "I am sure because I am seeing you". The young man concluded: "You must be crazier than me".¹⁸²

Body psychotherapies work with the body (objectivity), subjectivity and inter-subjectivity. The relationship with semiotics becomes quite evident during the whole process of development from the first moments of life on and the work of semiotics is centred on the genesis of semiosis.

As mentioned earlier, the process of imposing semiotics or 'semioticizing' may only, in reality, be considered together with processes of subjectivation, or, in other words, the process through which the subject is formed¹⁸³. Subject and semiose are implicated together in such a way that they form a single being.

In early childhood, the area of the formation of the senses is much easier to observe, but it can be said that empirically, in a therapeutic process where the body is also being worked with, be it in states of regression or not, the formation of new senses through subjectivation at the corporeal level, can also be considered a place for the accessing of observation, be it by means of a 'clinical eye' based in therapeutics, or by video images.

¹⁸² Safra, Gilberto, *Hermeneutica na Situação Clínica*, Ed. Sobornost, São Paulo, Brazil, 2000

¹⁸³ "Form" in the sense of intellectual formation and formation of the physical form.

The psychotherapeutic researchers who I presented in the previous chapter arrived at the images shown after clinical observation of the link between subjectivation and corporeal semiose.

In psychotherapy, the process of making the form complex is different from the idea of successive phases of development. In the processes of early childhood, the development phases may possibly be documented as such, but in a therapeutic process the complexity already established and following the process is done in a less flexible – or indeed entirely rigid – manner.

The make up of the semiose will invest itself not only on the cognitive, philosophical and psychological levels, but also – and quite deeply – on the affective, emotional and corporeal levels in a process which will mean the inclusion of actors on the symbolic, real and imaginary levels.

In psychotherapeutic interaction, many of the significant elements with senses are those linked to our corporeity which includes somatic posture, relationship rhythm, resonance, empathy and gestures, often unconscious, involuntary or non-conscious¹⁸⁴.

In this manner, not only in the therapeutic interpretation, but also the therapeutic intervention, different to psychoanalytic intervention, the corporeal level will interfere in the construction of sense. The patient's fantasy itself concerning the moment that the body comes into the picture, meaning there is no longer just speech: it anticipates "sense" at the transference level, just as the baby anticipates the presence of the mother or another affectionate relative. As we saw in the previous chapter, the doors into the unconscious are much wider than the well-known Freudian "free association", since access can be found through the muscles, skin and senses.

Means and rhythms bring about affection and an affection is "something" which flows from one to another. This 'something' can only be

¹⁸⁴ Organic processes.

defined as a sensation. It is an indeterminate zone, one of non-discernment, it is a moment that precedes natural differentiation, a symbiotic moment.

A good therapist, as before, is one who creates unfelt or unknown affection, and brings them out into the light, like “unthought known”, or as Christopher Bollas¹⁸⁵ wrote: “Due to an accumulative recipient, for example, of the various projective identifications of the patient, meaning that I know ‘something’ about the patient, without this having been sufficiently processed mentally by my own internal cognitions, reflections and eventual interpretations”.

Some patients create “points” or “bridges” of somatic identification, enabling the therapist to establish himself in this for a period of time, while other patients keep a rigorous affectionate distance, which weakens the therapeutic relationship and the ability of the therapist to be and feel.

Thinking of dance as a system of communication which, in itself, brings a content and which defines spaces and possibilities prior to gesture, it falls to us to make ourselves conscious and deal with the possibilities of transformation.

Deleuze¹⁸⁶ wrote: “The look of the mother is the same that is seen and recognized in the music and dance of the relationship. Ariadne’s thread, Orpheus’ Chant. The lullaby is as organizing as the look, which risks being shifted at any moment. The territory is primarily the critical distance between two beings of the same species to mark their distances.” (Mil Platos Vol. 4 pag.127)

The people, the others, de-territorializing themselves, arrive in my invisible organic territory, nevertheless sensitive to them, establishing a rhythm of seeking, a gestural and optical motor ritornelo that develops and

¹⁸⁵ Bollas Christopher, *The Shadow of the Object*, Columbia University Press, USA, 1987

¹⁸⁶ Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Felix, *Mil Platôs vol. 1,3,4* Ed. 34, São Paulo, 1995,96,97

transmits, trans-coding and becoming affectionate and sensual, as is, for example, the case here¹⁸⁷:

“She was sitting in front of me in my consulting room, she looked at me with eyes that were, at first, startled, with a stiff body, a stiffness that was pale and hypnotic, she was also paralyzed, at first unknown, a sort of question mark, a metaphor, a sign that I could not understand and which, in a certain way, paralyzed me as well. At one point, although I don’t remember exactly when, I started to sweat inside, I felt my body chilling with sweat, my vision started to cloud over, I was linked to my conscience by a slender thread which allowed me, after some time, to feel and think at the same time, and my feeling was telling me: “be afraid”.

But afraid of what? What is happening here? I check my moment and realize that there is no connection between the moment in my life which causes me to feel fear, much less in relation with this particular patient of whom I could say “she frightens me”, “her state frightens me”, “her paralysis frightens me”: I found nothing in this fleeting moment of *feeling-thinking*.

It was there that, much closer to my consciousness, returning her look with greater clarity, that I realized that something in her had changed; it looked as though she realized that I had understood something without her needing to say anything – my thought was re-examining and I remembered my first feeling when, full of sensations, she stared – “I’m afraid”, checking the feeling... she started to share some of her fears.”

What happened with me at that moment, and which I understood later on, released a sensation in me which led me to suppose a pre-meaning to the word which your own body cannot manage to give, this sensation resounded

¹⁸⁷ When I am using material which is the result of my own psychotherapy work, I am using fictitious names, whilst the situations themselves are not related with exact accuracy.

in my organism in a way that produced a supposition coming from an incorporeal form, a percepto¹⁸⁸ became perceptible.

When I could differentiate myself from her, meaning started to become clearer. I differentiated myself from her, semiosis happened out of this discrimination, separation. Before it was a continuous flow of communication, differentiation transformed continuity into discontinuity.

4. 1 Affects create effects

Remembering the initial citation from Spinoza about communication in the very nature of the body: affection has effects, corporeal effects which help us understand the difference between empathy and sympathy. In German there is a difference between "Mitgefühl" and "Mitleid", "feeling with" and "suffering with", Espinosa distinguishes between "compassion" (pain which touches the heart) and "commiseration" (masochistically suffering together). We can see this in the following example:

A person who was going through a moment of great anxiety in relation to something in their life that had not been identified, felt this sensation running through their body in the form of tremors, cold sweats, shivers, weakness, loss of feeling. At the same time, the person was losing contact with the interlocutor, as though they would faint. This state could be described as an anxiety attack.

As she had made no connection with any specific occurrence, the only way which I found of maintaining my link with her was to allow my organism to empathize, and echo with her. I started to breathe together with her and develop a facial and corporeal dialogue, without mentioning to her what I was

¹⁸⁸ Percepto is a concept created by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Percepto is a concept that comes from the word perception. It is a perception that begins, not directly with the individual, but with the surrounding environment, with the bio-system, or with the systemic interactions of the group in which the individual is embedded. For example, if there is panic in the environment, any individual may be influenced and experience that panic. More in "*What is Philosophy*", Ed. 34, São Paulo, 1993

doing; it was not an imitation, but an accompaniment, a way of trying to understand in myself what was going on inside her.

Going through these feelings, an image came into my head; "I want to be understood, I need someone to understand me, someone who understands my feelings, to speak to me and be present, someone whose presence I can feel." At the same time as these thoughts and sensations were passing through me, I started accompanying the breathing and realized that after a length of time her anxiety diminished to the extent that she was echoing with me.

Having allowed a little of the anxiety and the feeling of distress to pass, I asked her if at any time in her life she had felt abandoned or forsaken, without anyone to share what was happening, or if this maybe had any connection with her breathing.

She then told me that she had had breathing difficulties since she was born; difficulties which were not asthma, but problems which had arisen as a result of difficulties during her birth. Until she was 16 years old these breathing problems had been serious, having caused her great anxiety and a fear of death. The problems were treated in the best possible way by her parents who were, by the way, extremely caring and concerned, providing her with the best doctors, but for some unknown reason nothing made the situation any better.

At the moment that I was there breathing together with her, hearing-feeling her organism, this real organic feeling came to me from her inner sensations. At the same time it brought to her an updated memory of how much she needed someone sensitive to get close and explain to her that the organic sensations were normal and arose from her anguish and fear.

She was treated and cared for in a way that was rational and extremely divided from the corporeal feelings which continued to be considered "hysterical or emotional silliness".

It is important to point out here that this example is quite different from the last case. Here the dialogue begins with discontinuity. By perceiving this, the therapist by himself looked for continuity and non-differentiation, exploring resonance as a possibility to approach her in a non-verbal way. After understanding the therapist could discriminate again and allow a meaning to arise.

4.2 Resonance work

In another example of a session in a therapeutic process, the therapist describes a patient who presented herself to him as a person deeply devoted to her family and to work, being very proud of this determination and dedication. She also commented upon a small level of depression and some fatigue. She looked for this therapist because of his reputation of also working with the body. In these initial sessions, the therapist felt “carried away” by her strong and devoted presence or by what he saw as a chronic sensation of fragility and sadness.

The patient was hesitant for some time about entering into therapy, as she was frightened of the consequences that this could bring to her private and professional life. At that time, she was expecting to become a grandmother, but when this possibility became a reality, she surprised herself with feelings of annoyance and depreciation when she took care of her grandchildren.

After a few weeks the therapist suggested to her that this would be a good moment for her to accept some therapeutic support, despite being hesitant in sharing with her the deep crack which he had recognized between the self-image presented by the patient and her “visual/visceral” reaction to her presence in the consulting room.

The therapist therefore, carefully accompanied the process and the patient gradually accepted the therapeutic relationship and slowly started to understand and express her needs, despite questioning them.

Quick references to her childhood were made and sometimes she wondered if she had been expected or wanted by her parents or if she was there just to keep their marriage together – a marriage which seemed to be more of convenience than love.

The sessions continued and the therapist sometimes felt her to be irritated and her care did not in fact appear to really be care as she continually felt that she was censoring herself in her possible actions, actions which prevented the confrontation of the situations presented.

He consequently paid attention to the body and realized that the arms were folded across the chest, but without any other expression evident. It was coming to a moment in which the patient was going to have to make a decision concerning the advancement of her career and this would involve her having to start travelling.

Suddenly, there was a cry: “FUCK!” right in the middle of the traditional communication process. “At least once in my life I’d like a little exuberance in my life. Exuberance! I’m so careful with everything!” While she spoke, she threw her arms up in an arch, like a runner nearing the finishing line. But just after this gesture, her arms returned to her back, her right arm curling around herself and gripping her shoulder. Afterwards, the fingers on both her hands curved in in the direction of the chest, calming herself down as if nothing had happened.

The therapist recognized that this posture was so familiar that it became invisible and, in its invisibility, lost all significance.

“Make that gesture with your arms again,” said the therapist. “Think about your body and move your arms again in ‘exuberance’ and see what

happens.” She looked shocked at this suggestion and once again threw her arms in the air, echoing, “FUCK IT!” She spontaneously repeated the movement a number of times and started to cry...

She gradually started explaining that when she moved her arms, intentionally and consciously, her chest closed up and, in panic, not being able to breathe, an image of her grandmother appeared from her memory, saying: “Don’t let yourself get carried away by your emotions, my girl!” The patient remembered that her grandmother’s insult echoed inside her for many years and that “my girl” was from when she was three years old. Tears streamed out like rivers of rage from her body.

The gesture with her arms accompanied the therapeutic process for many weeks, becoming a point of reference in the exploratory therapeutic sequence. Working with the gesture, the therapist was helping the patient recover her exuberance, affirmation and, especially affectively, her ability to embrace and be embraced by those who loved her.

This presentation of a case is an example of non-verbal gestural and intentional work, using an intervention with the patient’s corporeal activity for an elaboration and elucidation of sub and pre-symbolic fields of experience.

Once again, the therapist works on his resonance in the relationship, waiting for the right moment for an intervention to be made, since the reply to the resonance that the therapist is feeling will come from the patient at the same time as the two are managing to be territories for each other.

The resonance comes to be a de-territorialisation of the sensitivity in the patient that touches the sensitivity in the therapist, without a conscious recognition, without a word that defines it, but as a percepto¹⁸⁹, a pre-perception of something which could come and is communicated.

¹⁸⁹Percepto is a concept created by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, and it means a perception that is independent of the people which experiment it. The percepto might create an individual perception. More in " *What is Philosophy* ", Ed. 34, São Paulo, 1993

4.3 Dreamwork

Interesting work with resonance can also be done with dreams; the resonance of elements of the dream of someone whilst they are awake in their body.

A patient had the following dream: He was travelling in an airplane; the airplane was having problems and started to shake about in the air and then exploded. The patient saw himself falling and whilst he was falling he was clutching at parts of the plane and also meeting people from his family and professional life, shortly before reaching the ground awake.

The dreamwork developed from the patient identifying with elements in the dream: the airplane, the pieces of the airplane, the people who go past him, the ground and the sensations connected and resonated with each of these moments, including the different moments of the fall.

The patient was the president of a multinational company – “I’d gotten to the top” – and suddenly he resigned because he could no longer bear the type of life that he was leading. Through the therapeutic experience he discovered a moment in his life in which he had had a breakdown, but had not given sufficient credit to the impact that what had happened had caused him. He

He hadn’t recognized during what he had done, however, all the consequences of what could happen afterwards, until one day he fainted in a car park in a place where he was spending his vacation and decided to look for some help.

In one of the sessions we did an exercise standing up, in which we positioned ourselves one in front of the other. I placed the palm of one of my hands on his forehead and asked him to gradually allow the weight of his head and then his body to fall into my hand and I would provide enough resistance to prevent him from falling.

I would keep him supported to the point that he could experiment with having someone in front of him providing with good support that was sufficient for him to relax a little, but relax with the support of someone present and felt by his body – not just on his own two feet as he had always been during his life.

It was this premise alone which was enough for him to feel his emotions and get through the experience. After a few minutes his body started to shake and I continued supporting him, allowing him to shake to the point that he could little by little connect the shaking to the deep fear that he had been feeling before.

During and after his resignation and to what could happen if he took the decision to no longer be an efficient, automated executive, but rather a human being who also feels fear flowing through his body in the form of shaking as well as not placing himself in a high position of omnipotence and power.

The dream related above occurred one week after this session and the telling of the dream took place in the session. The experience of resonance with the elements of the dream was elaborated and felt as follows: the high position in the powerful and omnipotent airplane meets an accident head on; the explosion is connected with the moment of resignation at work and its internal consequences on the organism.

The fall and the parts scattered along the way are connected to the possible losses following the impact of the resignation; people and “solid” parts from the airplane in which he was flying broke into pieces and these pieces provided support and meetings on the descent, but even so, the fear of falling was enormous, and the movement onwards, coming after the experience of the dream, was no longer a fall but a landing.

His great fear was not falling but rather landing with his body on the ground, putting his feet on the earth and feeling his own legs supporting him

firmly. They were no longer the legs of a company offering him a false airplane and an illusory place that did not allow him to feel his body supported by the ground. It was a conquering of the body supported in the experience of the soul, in relation with another who was present, not just subjectively, but objectively and physically, something which the couch could never give.

4.4 Inner feelings and sensations are basics to given arise to meaning

When José Gil¹⁹⁰ states that in a therapy session there exists an asymmetrical establishment where, as we have seen during the sessions outlined above, the becoming of the other takes place, he argues that these asymmetries are provided in those contexts which are in flux, in subtle and intimate feelings, such as in the body's recognition of vibration, which is grounded and from which one does not fall.

These feelings have accompanied my practice for 35 years now. Some call it experience, but what is important now is the sensation brought about by something inexplicable but rather 'experientable'. On a number of occasions along the way I have stopped to check if it was a lack of professional ability, a lack of understanding, of information, supervision or more technical diagnosis. How could this be happening? What exactly was this feeling?

For a long time, these feelings were a mystery inside me, accompanying me without explanation, being understood as if they were just a counter-reference, a projective identification, a resonance, something that was almost always identifiable as solely mine, with no connection the other. But it was through revelations that I learnt to realize that something that was being communicated did not belong to the verbal world, but rather arose from the pre-verbal learning process, in non-verbal communication.

¹⁹⁰ Gil, José, *Metarmofoses do Corpo*, Ed. Relógio D'Água, Lisbon, Portugal, 1997

The image of the girl in front of me was the first thing that I noticed: what sort of icon was this? Maybe there, within the idea of the semiotic, from the icon which touches you, there is meaning and which gives meaning and which gets deeper when the feelings and sensations pass through the real body.

The sign therefore only appears when investigated, and it is marginal to the spoken language: it symbolizes the meeting between the patient's organism and the research, the experimentation of the corporal relationship.

4.5 Gesture, music and communication

The choreographer and ballerina Klauss Viana said that the gesture of ballet should be “a gesture worked by a human being, a specialist, and which involves not only the memory of that body, but the body of all men (...) the form is consequence: the inner spaces should create the movement of each one. (...) it is not just dance, it is needing everything in relation to the world around us.”¹⁹¹

Here I find one of the strong reinforcements for the concept that psychotherapy or the relations which involve communication are a dance which has both voluntary and involuntary movements, involving a certain tuning, where this occurs largely outside of the consciousness and almost automatically and also involves an empathy that has to do with “mirroring” and “echoing”.

These two concepts together form what Stern¹⁹² calls the “Tuning of Affection”, in which the two share the initial process of “emotional resonance”, that is, through the dance involved in the tuning of affection, one can become conscious of states of being which will give meaning to communication.

¹⁹¹ *Folha de São Paulo* newspaper, 'Caderno Mais' section, April 7, 2002

¹⁹² Stern, Daniel, *O Mundo Interpessoal do Bebê*, Ed. Artes Médicas, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 1992

Art in time is music, music occurs while it lasts, resonance takes place while we are in communication, music comes from nature, from the organism: there, in the concept of the prelude, the territories are unveiled through music and dance, the characters impose the rhythm composing territorial motives, forming a melodic landscape.

Corporeal psychotherapy placed the body in flux, taking the patient from the couch and inviting him to experiment with movement and, together with it, arrive at new subjectivities, along a constant path of deconstruction and reconstruction.

The “dance”, the “rhythm” between the therapist and patient is a potent nutrient for these new currents, in an effort to find desire in the body’s currents, placing them in contact or indeed going beyond the organs.

5. Here we can see how some of the researchers dealt with this dance:

5.1 Alexander Lowen developed a number of working techniques to liberate the chest armour formed during development. This liberation helps to recover currents repressed during childhood and adolescence. Depending upon the formation of the character a certain technique is adopted to unblock the bodily area in question, for example¹⁹³:

Schizoide character:

The corporeal ring affected is the ocular ring and all the peripheral muscles full of tension, especially in the shoulders and arms which are linked directly to the head. In this case, the arms have power but the aggressive movement of hitting is split. The body does not take part in the action. The head is separated from the body.

¹⁹³ The examples are over simplified, more in-depth information about it in *Lowen's book: The Language of the Body*, Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1958, London, Great Britain

The therapist/patient working with the emotional expression of anger and resentment contained in these muscles due to the mother's distancing, anger or neglect, opens the possibility of the body, of the organism, to recover a flow of affection in the ocular region, alleviating the fear of affectionate closeness with another.

The eyes themselves receive an affective life, be it through anger, love or sadness by which they are passively imbued. The patient should feel a new significance as much for the affectionate, open posture, as for the posture of introversion, which he finds in himself, not just for defence, but for desire.

The bio-energetic therapist's technique will involve stimulating the arms, hands and face to express anger; discontentment to the point of leaving defence for attack, reverting to the corporeal sensations, re-signifying emotions, expression and feeling, from what is felt and not from what is understood.

Oral character:

Due to the oral character having characteristics in which the sensation of emptiness is predominant, making constant demands of the environment, as a form of relief from the feeling of emptiness, of a bag without a bottom, this is the character of a body that is never going to be filled since there is no bottom to gauge what is coming in.

This childhood frustration leads to a distorted expression of anger through the constant demand. The therapeutic exercise with this character will be to recover a certain muscular tonus through the expression of strong emotions. The difference with the expression of the schizoid individual is that in this case one of priorities will not be simply to externalize the emotion, but rather to learn how to contain the emotion in the muscles, so that he passes from being emotionally flaccid to being emotionally strong and firm, emotional and affective contention as a form of nutrition.

What is gained in the corporeal feeling will be basic to the formation of a new meaning in the life of the patient in question. In one way, he makes himself independent from “the other” in order to find himself, ceasing to deposit on others his childhood desires for fulfilment.

During development, especially during the first five years of life, as we have seen previously in the formation of signifiers, the semiose is primarily given in the body, and it is through the body that the child learns and develops.

When one works with someone’s character, one is working with some regressed point in the person, something which had stopped in time, frozen in a certain significance. When the therapist starts to work with this point, with the objective of thawing it out and create a flow, he is automatically working with the transition of signifiers, with a new semiose.

In these characters: psychopath, masochist and the rigid character types, the techniques for working are adapted to the characteristics of each one, which can be more fully understood in the book by Lowen which has been mentioned, but the objective of the work will always be to work with the corporeal base, in the somatic expression of each character, so as to regain the current which has been frozen in time.

In the Freudian characters, oral, anal and genital, the analytical work would look to regain signifiers in the same way and open doors for new signifiers, but always and only in the subjective form.

Session

In the quoted book, Lowen recalls one patient who, during the early part of her therapy became confused, bewildered and frightened when he had her arching her body backwards and holding the position. She had to stop after only a few seconds. She began to shake and tremble but she did not know what she was afraid of.

Lowen pointed out that she was afraid of the sensation in her back, that she was afraid that she would be overwhelmed, or that she might fall apart. All she knew was that she was confused. Yet in repeating the procedure and in having her work with her body steadily, she began to lose her confusion and fear.

After a time she told Lowen that she was no longer confused or afraid and that periods of confusion which had troubled her outside her therapy sessions had likewise disappeared. She could do more things with her body as she gradually gained control. She then began to free up more energy in herself and to experience pleasure as a bodily sensation in movement.

The capacity in this patient to feel pleasure after the sessions started to change the meanings of her life. We know that patients with this character (Hysterical) have a lot of difficulty in feeling this kind of pleasure, and by regaining the power in the patient's muscles and organism, by learning to deal, contain and express that kind of fear, the deepest meaning in her self became different, and the meaning of her life started to change as well.

In this example we can see how the communication between patient and therapist was critical and important from a semiotic perspective. When therapist and patient work together like this they are creating a semiose coming from the deep side of the organism: it was not the words that promoted the change, but the sensations in the body's system.

5.2 Stanley Keleman,

developed a different technique for organic intervention which we shall look at below:

For Keleman, the loss of somatic reality is an existential dilemma in which the problems persist due to our lack of understanding of how to organize or disorganize them. We do not learn how to disorganize and reform internal psycho-emotional links with ourselves or with others, leading us to

make inadequate use of ourselves and often leading to illness or emotional distress.

For him, each one of us has a choice: continue identifying with old patterns or reorganize ourselves. For Keleman, feelings, emotions and thoughts are all organized patterns of movement; people, he says, manipulate their emotions or develop physical stress patterns when they alter the basic, pulsatile ripples in their muscles.

To work with his model, he presents us with five steps which take into consideration the exercise of 'HOW', or rather, the experimentation of how you complete a certain activity, from forming an image through to actually completing it. This exercise helps you understand yourself better within your sensory patterns and within the emotional motor rhythms which your brain needs to understand to cooperate in the change of the emotional/body posture. For this he proposes a basic procedure based upon five people, to practice the 'HOW'¹⁹⁴ methodology.

In Step One, make a drawing or image of how you imagine yourself in a certain situation. In Step Two, discover the muscle pattern with which you organize this image; in Step Three, try deconstructing the pattern of muscular contraction; in Step Four, dwell on your experience and look at how new insights, feelings and emotions sprout forth. Then in Step Five, examine your reaction to this as a whole.¹⁹⁵

In this process, Keleman uses the image of an accordion to illustrate the organizing and disorganizing process. He asks the patients to intensify and exaggerate the patterns of behaviour, so that afterwards they can slowly give way, in stages, looking to re-establish the fluency of the pattern.

¹⁹⁴ Stanley Keleman, tells us that the "how" or the "exercise of the how" leads us to experiment with, how a certain activity is practiced – how to proceed from forming an image to completing it. The exercise of how is used to help you understand yourself, helping in the development of a conscious perception of your standards of feeling and motor-emotional rhythms which your brain needs to understand, so as to, in addition to creating a new way of being, create a new sense for life.

¹⁹⁵ Keleman, Stanley, *Corporificando a Experiência, Summus Editorial*, São Paulo, Brasil, 1995

This procedure of the accordion shows how the emotions are inhibited or expressed, how thoughts become actions, how feeling is constructed and the meaning is formed (page 19). The meaning looks to be found through the contracting and relaxing of the muscles.

This pulsation is our basic Self. Our essential activity, is to pulse, to continually contract and expand, and therefore, the pulsing is a pre-person inheritance, a pulsatile continuum, a basic life experience which organizes and disorganizes the structures which are represented. In his book 'Embodying Experience', Keleman presents us with a few case studies, one of which I quote below:



MARY

Emotional Anatomy
Exterior – dense
Interior – Inflated

Mary imagines herself to be the perfect wife. (page 94). She appears to be sexy, sophisticated, happy, stimulating and funny. She knows how to attract the attention of men and how to make her husband find her extremely attractive. Perpetuating her somatic image, she makes her life into a show, acting it out according to images that she thinks are sufficient and not as she really feels.

Whilst externally performing the role of Perfect Woman, inside she is shy, reserved and unsatisfied. Mary, the queen of sex, is, in fact, a passive and confused child, reproducing socially formulated images of femininity.

Her pattern of retention gives her a rigid, challenging appearance with well defined muscles. Her chest is held high and projected outwards, her arms are held gracefully “stiff” beside her body. Her pelvis has no spontaneous feelings, just empty sensations. Her excitement depends upon intense and inexhaustible fantasies. Her sexual movements are mechanical and focused upon performance.

Mary lives in steps One and Two, image and performance. Her excitement is a closed circle between fantasy and sexual performance. The work with Mary demands the HOW methodology in a number of areas of her life: How does she become a child contracting her pelvis? How does she become bigger than she is pushing up her chest? How does she imagine these roles; how do they perform and how are they undone? How is she anchored, firstly in the performance and in the models, and, secondly, in her own internal process? How does she make herself bigger, in order to live her fantasies?

So that Mary can create a new form, it is essential to end her role as “performer”. When she deconstructs her performer side, she allows her own images to emerge. She creates self-esteem undoing the great disbelief between her public life, as a sexual object, and her private life, as a child. When she deconstructs the raised chest and the rigid pelvis, she finds her true place.

With steps 3 and 4, Mary starts to inhibit the “performer” and connect with her visceral life. Once she has entered step Four, the insights link themselves to new feelings and natural sensations. In step Five, she confirms her own way of being a woman.

Through Mary’s story, Keleman shows us how a significant somatic form became chronic and can be modified in its sense through intense technical/emotional work performed step-by-step across a number of therapy sessions. Using the accordion method, together with his patient, he moved through various somatic meanings in her life which produce numerous insights until arriving at that one which is the closest possible to that of the essential which already existed inside Mary, but which was repressed, distorting the true path of her life.

5.3 Gerda Boyesen,

studied physiotherapy and psychology, which gave her a deep understanding of the body during the therapeutic process. Possible because of being a woman and paying attention to body signs that are easier for a woman to perceive (my interpretation), possibly because of the experience of being a mother, or a mother to be, or the sensibility that belongs more to a woman herself.¹⁹⁶

Gerda, through listening to the body’s reactions such as noisy visceral movements, post-session reactions like diarrhoea, constipation, shaking, sweating or skin temperature, etc., decided to listen more closely to those responses and subsequently created a kind of stethoscope with a long pipe that would allow her to touch the patient on a massage table. During the touching she would listen directly to the natural visceral reactions or noises coming from the viscera or peristaltic movements.

¹⁹⁶ Boyesen, Gerda, *Entre Psiquê e Soma*, Ed. Summus, São Paulo, Brazil, 1987

She discovered that the sounds coming from the peristalses were directly connected to the kind of muscles she was touching, the way she was touching the body, the kind of skin she was feeling, the kind of breathing that was going on in the patient.

Of most interest to us is that the sounds were meaning something that could be comprehensible or at least give a clue to an interpretation. With practice, the noises were becoming clearer – she was like a mother who understands a baby's expression, metaphorically linked to the patient through an umbilical cord (the stethoscope) and listening to the deepest expressions of the organism, like a mother with a baby in the womb. (my interpretation).

If the muscles were hypertonic, i.e. full of blocked energy, the sounds were strong like drum beats, chaotic at first, but during the massage they became more flowing, diminishing the rhythm and the strength into something clearer, like a river flowing over little stones.

From the first messages of the noise, it was possible to understand that the person was full of emotions needing to be expressed, usually related to repressed anger, disappointment or frustration. The meaning of the thunderous noises was related to that in non-verbal communication.

The massage could stir up really strong emotions to be expressed or could be dissolved and understood by the massage. If the muscles were flaccid, with no energy, abandoned, empty of movement, the noises would be far away, deep and slow.

The work of the massage would be to find space in the muscle so that the deep energy could occupy the space. The therapist, by touching the patient in a certain way that would help to fulfil the muscles, brings a new meaning to the muscles, and consequently to the patient, because he will be able to use the muscles in a way that is different to the way he was used to

using them. When the patient starts to make gestures connected to his fulfilment, he will create a new consciousness or new memories for himself.

In this way, Boyesen developed several kinds of massage connected to the different needs of different people, each of them with the objective of opening new meanings through body change. The massages could be on the following levels: vegetative, muscular and skin.

The peristalses for Boyesen became “psycho-peristalses”, which means the digestion of emotions, sensations - psychological meanings relating not only to the digestion of food. The work with the stethoscope is a work that is totally non-verbal in itself, a non verbal dialogue between patient and therapist, producing meanings through resonances, through touch and feelings.

Example

Boyesen gives us the example of a woman suffering from anxiety-neurosis¹⁹⁷, a condition with strong vegetative symptoms. This woman hadn't been able to leave her home for about 6 months. She was a young, married actress. Her illness had first shown itself in the form of a sudden nervous breakdown on stage, at the premiere of a new play when she had to be carried away and the performance postponed. After that she became the victim of repeated strong attacks of anxiety and was unable to leave her home.¹⁹⁸

When Boyesen first saw her for initial treatment, she started working with her lying down on her front and worked with her back, with the muscles of the lumbar region. At first, nothing happened, but as soon as she worked with her right upper trapezious and gave her a small, muscular shock impulse in

¹⁹⁷ Anxiety neurosis is the most common form of psychoneurosis occurring among individuals of above average intelligence. Ross has defined it as a series of symptoms which arise from faulty adaptation to the stresses and strain of life. It is caused by over action in an attempt to meet these difficulties. Source: www.depression-guide.com/anxiety-neuroses.htm

¹⁹⁸ Boyesen, Gerda in *The Collected Papers of Biodynamic Psychology*, vol. 1 and 2, limited edition, Biodynamic Psychology Publications, London, England, 1978

order to release her breathing, there were results. The muscle, formally so tense and swollen, at once went very soft, the patient's face turned pale green and she started to shiver violently.

After a while she lay quite exhausted and left. Boyesen maintained regular contact with her by telephone. For the next ten days she experienced almost constant nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. During this period, in order to let the organism discharge its vegetative anxiety undisturbed, she received no treatment for fourteen days.

During the second session, the right trapezious was still as soft as it had been at the end of the first session, in strong contrast with the other, highly tense muscle. Working on the left side produced the same strong reactions of violent shivering and the pale green face. Over the next few days she went through the same vegetative reactions as before.

In the same manner the therapist treated her whole body, but took great care to deal with one muscle at a time, because to work with each tense muscle produced all the vegetative reactions. Then after a period of sessions, the reactions became milder, and in close connection to this the anxiety also became milder, until she began going out onto the streets again with her husband and friends.

Finally, as the shivering reactions grew milder and milder, she exclaimed that she had reached a point where she had been at the beginning, shivering a little before going on the stage and trying to control it. This reaction is well known amongst artists or people who usually have to expose themselves to the public as 'stage fright'.

This is an example of anxiety developed in adult life. We can see that the treatment was conducted most of all at the vegetative level of the patient. The vegetative response of the organism was a search to re-balance the homeostases. By touching the muscles, the therapist, in this case Gerda

Boyesen, stimulated vegetative responses connected to the fear the patient had developed that was being manifested through anxiety.

When the therapist helped to release the muscle tensions there was an immediate shivering reaction (fear in the body makes one shiver) and later the complete loosening of the diaphragm and intestines demonstrated through diarrhoea and vomiting (the work of psychoperistalses).

The patient was controlling the fear in the muscles. As long the fear finds a place (a person) to relate to, then it can be expressed. Boyesen, by touching and massaging, was creating space and giving personal space for that to happen. It was like saying: "Yes, with me you can express your deepest fear, I can handle that, let it come and make sense of it with me."

As soon as the resonance and transference was going on, the patient could understand and create a sense for her. The sense of the fear was felt in the body and welcomed by the therapist in the setting of the clinic. This experience shows us that sense might come directly from the organism in non-verbal adult communication.

We can see that the therapist did not interpret and did not give any medicine for what was going on, but simply accompanied the process; creating a container in the non-verbal process and allowing space and time for the patient to signify what was going on in herself. We can associate this with the mother that holds the baby or the child when she is afraid of something - the infant is held until she can recover the homeostases or the organic equilibrium.

This patient was able to re-signify the whole situation, handle it, and return to a more normal relation with the fear.

5.4 David Boadella,

created a way of working based on the “Flow of the Form and Postures of the Soul”¹⁹⁹. He worked with movement and postures of development such as flexion, extension, traction, opposition, rotation, canalization, activation and absorption, as discussed in chapter two.

Two nervous impulses standardize our movements: the first originates in the cerebral cortex. This is known as the alpha nerve that supplies the voluntary muscles with directed signals to perform actions. We can speak about the alpha system calling it an **action system**.

The second nervous impulse originates in the base of the brain and this is known as the gamma nerve. Through cellular fibres it gives signals to the muscles to place itself in the appropriate tonus: we can call this second system a **prompt system**. The prompt system is intimately related to mood and intention (the soul of the muscle).

Without compromising the voluntary action, our posture can communicate our internal attitude²⁰⁰ and feelings. We can disconnect the attitude from the movement tendency. In the attitude, we see a quite motionless form that reflects an inhibited movement. The shoulders are kept raised and the retracted pelvis is kept backwards, unable to swing. The head held to one side can always avoid being hit.

¹⁹⁹ Somatic Psychotherapy Biosynthesis, *Flow of the Form and Postures of the Soul*, Based on the lecture of David Boadella made during the 12^o World-wide Congress of Psychosomatic Medicine at the University of Basileia, September 1993, adapted by Rubens Kignel for the Wilhelm Reich Commemorative Congress in São Paulo, 1997

²⁰⁰ Attitude refers to the moment when a body is paralyzed in an expression. For example someone looks angry in their facial expression, but it is not angry. Someone's shoulders may be dropping down as if they are depressed, but they are not. Attitude can be or not connected with what is going on at the current moment or not.

On the other hand, in the movement tendency, we can see the beginning of a standardized action. The shoulders suggests a hint "to relax shoulders", the pelvis starts to flirt, the head moves forward like a speaker ready to open its mouth and announce its presence to a group of people.

The conditional movement overlaps the involuntary, the spontaneous, in the same way that the conscientious mind overlaps the unconscious.

Working with movement impulses and allowing spontaneous changes of form are, consequently, a way to contact the unconscious without using the words as a primary tool.

Boadella tells us of a case:

A woman with a history of abuse in early childhood was working on her anger in relation to her grandfather in a therapy group. She tried to express her anger through aggressive movements with her arms, whilst standing up, but she found that the feeling grew weak too quickly and was substituted by fear. When she was encouraged to bolster her anger with her voice, it was also difficult and she was restricted in her use of words or sounds which aided in forming barriers against her aggressor.

The careful observation of her body signs showed that her body's natural impulse was not a fast and angry forward movement, but a slow, firm pressure downwards. This led her to reorganize her body position in a way which was, for her, more effective in channelling and expressing a clear limit against her grandfather, as much in terms of space (stay away from my body) as in time (the past is over now).

She discovered that she was pressing into the earth with all her strength, and an image arose of herself pushing down on the top of her

grandfather's grave (who was already dead), and that, in this position, a lot of things came up at the same time in just a few minutes.

*First, in terms of energy, she made very strong contact with the base of her spine, an area of the body which is a source of strength, desire and independence. Secondly, she discovered her voice, and could start to clearly verbalize her feelings against her grandfather. The first word she found was 'Ich', the word of the independent personality. Thirdly, she came upon the image of a cross. The image of the cross represents a great many things: it may suggest crucifixion by childhood traumas; it may suggest resurrection, the new life transcending and moving beyond these traumas; it may represent the fusion of the flow of horizontal energy, through the arms, with the flow of vertical energy, through the spine, with the heart at the centre of the cross. We should also remember the term which, in German, means the root of the spine; **Kreuz**.*

Following this intense episode in dealing with the trauma of abuse in a new way and in a natural way, this woman became more level-headed, experienced more happiness in her life, ended all identification with the role of a victim and became much more liberated from the confusion between impotent anxiety and ineffective anxiety, which had previously disturbed her.²⁰¹

We can see that in the therapeutic relationship, the movement of body action was fundamental to the gradual construction of a new corporeal meaning and the life of this person. In the first place, we observe that the primary posture adopted, which could be confused with forward moving aggression as if to keep away an aggressor, is actually a firm and downward aggressive movement leading her to significantly reorganize her posture in terms of providing limits and not attack.

²⁰¹ Boadella, David, in *Energia e Carater*, vol. 2, Summus Editorial, São Paulo, Brazil, 1997, organization Rubens Kignel.

This postural flow immediately allowed her to attach new meaning to the confrontation with her grandfather, for something more mature and less chaotically defensive, developing a dynamic equilibrium between the system of action and the system of readiness. The therapist followed and reinforced the movement which came from the “soul of the muscle” and not that which came from the system of action (conscious, voluntary) which had already been established as a pattern of response in the person.

Many of the polarities which have been described were also worked with: the movement from vertical (on foot) to horizontal (stooping over, closing the grave); the movement of the external action (repelling the intrusion without success) to internal resources (having independence); the ability to combine the sensitivity and openness of the heart with the strength of desire; the ability to go back to the time the trauma took place, to find a new solution and afterwards to go forward, overcoming the trauma and developing a new confidence in the here and now – and the future.

The participation of the body at the three levels: emotional, sensory and motor, was also of fundamental importance in working with centring, perception and movement, the emotion connected to breathing, the perception connected to the space of what happened and the movement connected to action. Without these instances, a re-definition of meaning would not have been possible in this story.²⁰²

5.5 John Pierrakos,

Three principle theses are interwoven in the therapeutic approach known as “Core Energetics”. Firstly, a person is a psychosomatic unit. Secondly, the source of a cure lies inside the self and not in an external agent. Thirdly, the whole of existence forms a Unit which is moved in the

²⁰² More about this in *Energia e Carater*, vol. 2, Summus Editorial, São Paulo, Brazil, 1997, organization by Rubens Kignel

direction of a creative evolution, as much as a whole as in its countless components.

In Pierrakos' experience²⁰³, the majority of people seek the help of a therapist with their character defences well armed. If they have any intuition of their energy centre, they cannot manage to mobilize the movement, evoke it, accompany it or work with it. An impenetrable baggage of obstacles have accumulated around the Core²⁰⁴, obstacles which exist in the form of entanglements and functional blockages.

In treatment, the patient engages that which Pierrakos calls the Core's creative consciousness whenever it can be touched and activated from the periphery. He believes that everyone, including a psychotic character, retains points of intersection between the interior and exterior realities. His technique passes through four stages:

Stage 1: Penetration of the Mask

The work firstly confronts the mask, which is, for Pierrakos a falsification of the interior reality. Normally he works with the release of negative emotions through kicking, beating, vocalizing. This physical work increases the level of energy which activates the tensions and blockages, making their existence and locations apparent. The therapist now starts to understand the meaning of the blockages in the dynamics of the movements and their role in the retention and limitation of the flow of feelings. He observes what he can in the patient's body during the exercises in terms of language, breathing and movement, both voluntary and involuntary.

For the therapist and for the patient, each of the body's expressions carries meaning, tells its past history and the way it was conducted. Almost all the expressions are chronic and constitute the personality pattern.

²⁰³ Pierrakos, John, *Energética da Essência*, Editora Pensamento, São Paulo, Brazil, 1990

²⁰⁴ It is the reality which comes from the place deepest inside the human being, the source of positive energy which, if it has not been distorted, serves as a source of harmonious functioning.

A crucial point in the process of penetrating the mask is when the patient recognizes that the “exterior desire” “conspires” to keep the character armour. Pierrakos recognizes that to become conscious of this fact, the person may start to assume a significant responsibility for their problems. The body starts to make “sense” of the signifier and re-signifier; the Core has been touched.

Stage 2: the Liberation of the Inferior “I”

In passing through the mask, the shadow (in Jungian terms) is revealed as the place where the true resentments are hidden; those harboured against that which was repressing and violent - the undistorted primal negativities. The mask hides them as a means of protection from the exterior world.

These repressed expressions were once intuitions, spontaneity, and it is said that all pathology starts with the inhibition of expression in an abrupt and traumatic manner. Anger and hate may be imprisoned behind the armour, but they are actually forces related to life as their primary objective would be to preserve the core.

Together with these emotions, spontaneous and intuitive movement is also imprisoned, whilst each character will have its own characteristics of movement and expression.

The work in this stage will therefore be to take control of the deeper feelings and retake the ability to express them with the somatic body. During this expression, there is an expansion of consciousness and the possibility of re-signifying the situation lived through in the past is opened.

The expression of negative emotions and the removal of the mask open up a space in which to contact the Core. It is a long process of deconstructing, creating and recreating new meanings for the life. The

semiose takes place in a relationship flow between the therapist and the patient.

Stage 3: Being Centred on the Superior “I”

Now that the ‘I’ has contacted the core and its strengths, allowing the energy to flow from the inside out, dealing with the negative energies and against the real dangers of the outside world, and not against interior movements, it is the moment for the therapist to stimulate the patient and strengthen his core as a force with which to leave an imprisoning and subconscious situation.

The connection with the outer world changes in terms of quality and a certain lack of confidence is therefore natural during this phase. In the transference, the figure of the therapist is of extreme importance, principally in strengthening that which was fragile and has become a defence. In this phase, every one of the therapist’s gestures and words will help in the re-signifying of the patient’s interior, in order for him to strengthen himself at his core.

Stage 4: Discovery of the Life Plan

A large part of this stage is based upon the expansion of the person’s sense of confidence. Basically, this means the expansion of the basic feelings developed during therapy for other spaces and future times – in other words, moulding life according to a “superior consciousness”. This stage moves from inside out, free of restraint, as the place of its development and not the place of its repression as it was previously.

Case study

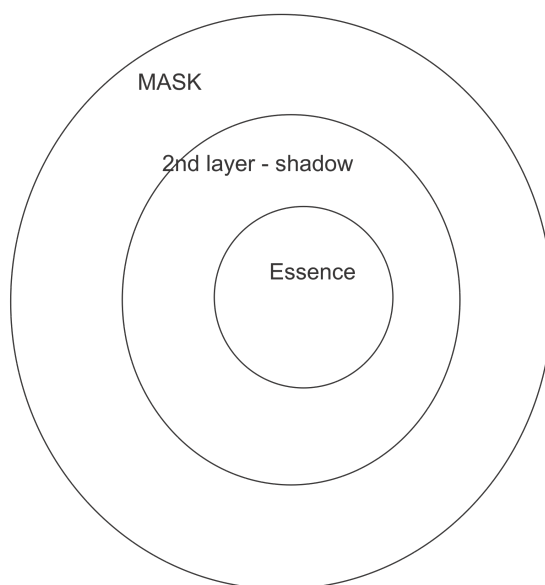
Pierrakos tells us of the case of a 54-year old woman who came in search of help. She walked slowly, with drooping shoulders and a tortured expression – as if defeated or desperate. Her jaw was determined and

pushed forward and her eyes carried an expression of pain. She looked as though she had been crucified. When they started to discuss the reasons for her presence there, she said: “I am locked in an iron mould. My body is like a stone. Help me feel it; I’m so oppressed.”

These unconscious expressions that the body presents us with are the icon of its presence in the world. Between this woman and the world, there exists a constant interlocutor which leaves her this way. In one way, this interlocutor is invisible to her, but very often it is visible to the therapist.

The art of psychotherapy lies in making the invisible, visible. When the therapist starts to work with the mask, the most apparent symptom starts to open space for that place in the second stage where there lie hidden the true feelings of resentment and anger which have let her live as if in an iron mould.

Confronting and making a person aware – a person who, at some point in their life was pushed into this place - will demand energetic forces not fully used previously, and which remain latent, waiting for the moment to break out. In this way, we have the outermost layer: the mask; the middle layer: the shadow; and the central and original layer: the core.



For Pierrakos, the external negative forces primarily attack the core, which repels them by means of the 2nd layer, which transforms itself into a shadow to protect the core, and then, with the passage of time, creates a more external layer, which is harder, an armour which is called the mask.

In both theory and practice, the objective is to arrive at the core to reinforce it to the point whereby it can create new defensive possibilities. The mask formed by these defences started to dominate the subject's subconscious. The objective of this work is seeing the person start to dominate the mask and not vice-versa.

The appearance and feelings of the person's figure changes from phase to phase, forming new meanings in accordance with the signifiers being related to. The patient should recover the meaning of his life as he regains contact with the forces and desires of his core.

The person's appearance is connected to that which Pierrakos calls the aura, which would be that which the somatic body emanates beyond its skin, that which is around it. When people are far from their core, the emanation of the aura is also distorted as we can see in the illustrations of aura in the part of our text referring to Pierrakos.

6. The body transducer of signs

Jose Gil²⁰⁵ tells us that Levi-Strauss, wanting to understand the symbolic effectiveness of a shamanistic chant which was intended to alleviate the suffering felt during difficult childbirths, retraces the path of the shaman and his assistants or spiritual protectors, towards the house of Muu, a force which had taken possession of the sick woman's soul.

²⁰⁵ Gil, José, *Metarmofoses do Corpo*, Relogio d' Agua Editores, Lisbon, Portugal, 1997.

This journey in fact describes what happens in the movement through the sick woman's vagina and the uterus, in a way that the chant indirectly acts upon the muscles and the organs of a person who was previously "conditioned".

Gil asks: what sort of symbolic operator allows the reorganization of the illness' signifiers in a language with meaning? The only possible answer is the body, since this is what makes up the support system for symbolic permutations and communication between the different codes that are present – amongst which it is necessary not to forget those relating to society, which the illness disorganizes, and which the cure re-establishes, reintegrating the individual into the group once again.

The interactor of codes is the body and its energies. The body on its own does not signify, it says nothing, simply speaks the language of others (codes), as it is to the body that they come to register themselves.

Gil says however that the body allows signifying: a trance plays a dual role: that of decoding a "used" or "sick" body, and the rebirth of a healthy, healed body. We can associate this theory of Gil's with a therapeutic process which involves working also with the body. In this work, the therapist receives the "used" body and in the process looks to assist in the rebirth of a different body, one that is more in accordance with that which would be the core, the person's origin, a reorganization of somatic posture with new meaning.

The therapeutic relationship is the space created which allows for the progressive incursion into bodies, with special focus on the patient. Only within this ritual of the therapeutic space can a new meaning arise. The journey from an old meaning to a new one demands the confrontation of the 'uncodeable', the unknown passing, to arrive at a new understanding, the acquisition of a new meaning.

Each one of the psychotherapeutic issues discussed here suggest specific journeys, but ones which have the body in common, because it is through the body that the passage takes place and it is the body which receives the strengths and meanings of transformation.

The therapist also works as a fluctuating signifier who leaves his marks on the contra-transfer and resonance, and the marks left by this fluctuating signifier are witness to it all.

The therapist as fluctuating signifier is always accompanied by a certain energy in the form of gestures, skin, touch, vital words, thoughts, sound, and bodily and facial expressions which resonate with the patient emitting signals and signs.

Let us go back to Gil and the example of the mime who speaks with his public through his body. The public is in “suspense” out of the fear that the mime will lose the power of communication, but the work of the mime is to make sure at all times that he is creating a signifier for the other, sufficient to be able to signify; his art is similar to a tightrope walker. The body takes itself to a special meta-language.

In the case of the patient/therapist, they are, in a certain way, like mimes who try to communicate signifiers from their lives through their bodies, their feelings, their emotions. The body is used as a system of signs to signify the same meanings as articulated language: it builds the body in meta-language.

The body is transformed into one that is mimetic, since the origin in its history of development was disarticulated, a point which we can also refer to as being that of a puppet (in which the signals are given by another), since it is also disarticulated in its articulations. The body becomes a good issuer of signs, through the reduced number of possibilities it has with which to articulate itself. The body in itself signifies the other in itself.

As Gil goes on to say, the mime uses his body to trace an alternate route (a different version than which he really is) – he moves from body to body, from his body-signifier to the signifying body of the therapist, from an abstract body to a concrete body and vice-versa.

What does the therapist supply, so that the gestures, emotions, sensations, visions and dreams of the mime-patient find meaning? As therapists, can we provide exactly that which they are lacking: a journey from one articulation to another, their “spontaneity” and the flow which they lost during their education? The spontaneity which is part of a non-codified body, of the anxious and unarticulated body.

Safra tells us that: *“In human engagement, where the aesthetic experience inaugurates the possibility of existing as a being before another, we have the entry of the individual into a capacity for the articulation of symbols of the self, which constitute and present the experiences of its existence in its own singular way of being. They are images which acquire importance since they are presences of **being**.”*²⁰⁶

Throughout development, there is a continuity process of creation of the symbol’s creation out of the self. This symbolizing movement remains throughout life, being characterized by making the non-familiar familiar, sometimes becoming an armour and at other times flowing. In front of a process of symbolisation, where the primordial function is not only the representation of the absent object, but the articulation of plastic forms that allows the individual to exist in the world. The baby in this process becomes the mother and the world extensions of it itself.

Safra tells us of a 9-year old boy who was brought in for analysis due to problems in relating with his peers and learning difficulties. His behaviour was inappropriate to all that went on around him and he was very distracted in the classroom. At first he behaved in this way during analysis, but he

²⁰⁶ Safra, Gilberto, *A Face Estética do Self*, Unimarco Editora, São Paulo, Brazil, 1999

gradually gained confidence and revealed a completely parallel life in his imagination. He had daydreams in which he had incredible underwater adventures without contact with the outside world.

Safra describes that in the analysis room “we swam together, diving down and coming across interesting species of marine life, as well as fighting with sharks and whales.” These activities which he once just imagined and with which he withdrew from the world, became experiences that were lived out with another, and his imagination gained a full and real “body”. The symbol of the imaginary is made present and made into a symbol through the body in relation with another body.

Little by little, this child started to no longer be a fish out of water and, through the underwater world, started to talk about each one of the issues which prevented him from occupying a place in the world with others. He will never lose his healthy and creative ability to imagine, but he will find a body ready to express his imagination and find meaning in the world, being a signifier at the same time as being a meaning.

6.1 Presentative symbol and the body

Susane Langer²⁰⁷ talks to us of presentative symbols as opposed to representative symbols, and says that it is a mistake to believe that only the representative symbol could designate a symbolic capacity as a high level of complexity.

The presentative symbol is introduced into psychoanalysis at the moment at which some analysts feel the need to study and form an opinion on the non-verbal dimension of inter-human communication. Langer also shows us that the presentative symbols are also symbols of great complexity and intellectual sophistication, despite being presented in bodily form.

²⁰⁷ in Safra, Gilberto, *Hermenêutica na Situação Clínica*, Edições Sobornost, São Paulo, Brazil, 2006

Presentative symbols have a natural characteristic being created from human corporeity. The presentative symbol is shown alive because the human being extends his body, transformed by imagination, over the world.

When Winnicott referred to transitional qualities, he confirmed that these qualities should not be interpreted or decoded. The object would have importance in itself and not only by representation. The importance would be in the journey of a “feeling” from one reality to another.

This symbol moves like a vehicle of the process; if we interpret it, we lose the experience of the game.²⁰⁹ Gerda Boyesen would always say that in a therapy session, a deep breath from the patient, a loud yawn, meant a lot and any interpretation was unnecessary.

In order to access the presentative reading, the person must have passed through sensory forms that were the fruit of bodily inter-relations between the individual and the medium.

Safra says that these sensory forms provide access to the capacity for affection by the body, and also by presentative symbols articulated in time and space, in the materiality of the world. This is why he affirms that the symbolic register is related to intuition and empathy, which are bodily functions as we sense intuition and empathy through our feelings.

6.2 Empathy and meaning

Edith Stein, in her book ‘On the Problem of Empathy’²¹⁰ proposes a phenomenological investigation into feeling in itself, and affirms that, through phenomenology, we have memories of experiences that we do not live directly. In other words, various experiences we carry inside ourselves exist

²⁰⁹ in Safra, Gilberto, *Hermenêutica na Situação Clínica*, Edições Sobornost, São Paulo, Brasil, 2006

²¹⁰ Stein, Edith, *On the Problem of Empathy*, Washington, ICS Publications, 1989.

because we have had the opportunity to accompany the experience of another person.

Stein cites a number of examples: in hearing a repulsive description of something experienced by someone else, we can 'live' that repulsive experience with this person presenting us with it from his own feelings. Sexually, we can become excited from the experience of others. Therefore, by means of the body, we are continually accompanying the experience of others. It is this phenomenon which Stein calls *empathy*.

Today, we can associate this phenomenon with the discovery of mirror neurons²¹¹:

Mirror neurons perform a function that is crucial to human behaviour. They are activated when someone observes the action of another person. What is most impressive is that this mirroring is not bindingly dependant upon our memory. If someone performs a complex body movement which we have never performed before, our mirror neurons identify the corresponding proprioceptive and muscular mechanisms in our body system, and we tend to imitate, subconsciously, that which we observe, hear or perceive in some way.

But these mirror neurons do not only allow the direct recognition of the actions of others, they also allow an understanding of one's intentions, the social significance of one's behaviour and one's emotions. Iacoboni et al. (2005) use the fMRI to show that the mirror neurons do not only codify actions, but also the intention of the action. In this study, three videos were presented: "action", "context (without action)" and "intention". The "action" video showed a hand picking up a cup in two different ways (gripping it as pincers and like a claw would). The "context (without action)" video showed a scene with a table prepared for a light meal or a table with the scene after the meal. The

²¹¹ Mirror neurons: Allan Pablo Lameira; Luiz de Gonzaga Gawryszewski; Antônio Pereira Jr. Universidade Federal Fluminense - UFF ¹¹ Universidade Federal do Pará, Brasil

“intention” videos brought together the “context” and “action” videos. In other words, a video showed the action of a hand (picking up a cup) within the context of a light meal and in another video the action of the hand in the context of preparing the table. As such, the videos provided the grounds necessary to understand the intention of the hand picking up the cup. More specifically, the table prepared to have a light meal (or after the meal) and the hand picking up the cup with a certain grip, signalled that “someone” was preparing to drink (or to clear the table). The observation of actions performed in certain contexts and compared with the other two (just the action or just the context), provoked significantly greater activity in the lower frontal rotation and in the pre-motor ventral cortex, where the actions of the hand are represented. In this way, the pre-motor areas with mirror neurons are also involved in the understanding of the intention to act (Iacoboni et al., 2005).

The emotions can also be mirrored since, when we see someone cry, for example, our cells reflect the expression of the feeling that could be behind the tears and bring back the memory of moments which we have already experienced. The name ‘empathy’ is given to this ability, and it is one of the keys to deciphering the behaviour and socializing of human beings. These cells also reflect a series of elements of non-verbal communication, such as, for example, how small changes in the face and in the tone of voice help in the understanding of what another is thinking or feeling (Dobbs, 2006).

According to Rizzolatti and Craighero (2004), what characterizes and guarantees the survival of human beings is the fact that we are capable of organizing ourselves socially, and this is only possible because we are capable of understanding the actions of other people. As well as this, we are also capable of learning by copying and this faculty is the basis of human culture (Ramachandran & Oberman, 2006; Rizzolatti et al., 2006)

Children with autism have great difficulty in expressing understanding or imitating emotions such as fear, joy or sadness. This is why they close themselves off in a private world and end up developing serious problems involving socializing and learning. Autistic behaviour reflects a picture

compatible with the breakdown of the mirror neuron system. The understanding of actions (essential for summoning an attitude in dangerous situations), copying (extremely important for the learning processes) and empathy (the tendency to feel the same as a person in the same situation feels, which is fundamental in the construction of relationships) are functions attributed to mirror neurons and these functions are exactly the ones which are found in autistic people (see review in Ramachandram & Oberman, 2006).

The mirror neurons can explain many mental abilities which remain mysterious and inaccessible to experiments and neuroscientists believe that the appearance and improvement of these cells have provided for the development of important functions such as language, copying, learning and culture.

For the author Edith Stein, and, as we can see, also for science, empathy is the possibility of accompanying the feelings of another. As was written in the first chapter on the question of empathy in Daniel Stern's work, he affirms that in copying, we never copy someone else to perfection, and this characterizes the individuality of each of us.

Edith Stein affirms that we can follow two circuits: that of feeling and that of articulation of the thoughts of another. This is in accordance with and affirmation of Stern that we never reach the original experience of the other. We can intuit values, but not know these values directly.

Therapists can therefore learn about the feelings of patients by means of our corporeal feelings, as was also explained in the first chapter on vegetative identification and resonance.

6.3 Icon and meaning

Through the icon one can remember that which is being represented. However, the icon does not only have the representative dimension. Safra

gives us the example of when we see a believer in a church, their first action is to greet the icons. They develop a personal relationship with the icon, since the icon is also a presentative dimension which allows an experience, and as such, the icon at the same time as it is a representation and a presentative object, it presents the transcendent, making reference to the ontological dimension of the human being.

The human being, the patient and his body are a presence, but it is seen much more than it is felt, meaning that entirely capturing the essence of the other is impossible, and we will always therefore have the issue of mystery as the other is transcendence.

In the clinic situation, the iconic symbolic function appears as a revelation, as an appearance of the new, of the unknown, surprising both the therapist and the patient, and it is almost never the fruit of interpretation.

6.4 Symbol: representative, presentative and iconic

For Safra, with whom I agree and empathize, the medical practice goes through three modalities of the symbol: representative, presentative and iconic, and each of these registers operates in a specific manner. Representation operates in a rational way, the presentative in a synthetic way and the icon operates through a paradox. The icon is at once an object and a non-object, an image and a non-image, sign and non-sign, presence and non-presence.

The paradox, in so far as it contemplates man's way of being ontological, is a fundamentally ethical perspective. If the human being is seen solely by the summit of absolute solitude, it means that he is observed by one of the ways of the madness that happens to him. If, on the other hand, man is seen solely as how he is held by the world, we find another face of human

madness. The human being is a being of frontiers, which happens on the horizons of worlds.²¹²

The human being is born at the first inhalation and dies at the last exhalation. Life can be summed up in one breath. Birth and death accompany us with each inhalation and exhalation along the course of life. Every human action is always measured by breathing, by birth and by death, by the origin and the end. The body in itself bears this objective, subjective and inter-subjective movement together. In any human gesture, these elements appear.

In the mother/baby relationship, this also takes place: the breathing is a dialogue which flows and determines communication whilst in the therapist/patient relationship the same thing takes place. But there is a basic difference between the two relationships; the first is a relationship which flows naturally, has no focus on work, looks to be the most spontaneous it can be and have no outside interference. The second is constantly working - despite the search for spontaneity and surprise it is a relationship that looks for signs and signifiers, whereas the first signs and signifiers occur naturally in the process of development. The mystery of understanding exists between both, but in the professional practice, this will be a constant of the work, the meaning will always be something learned.

“To a large extent, people reveal themselves in the way they respond to us and how, via reciprocity, they convey a sense of shared experience. The same is true for animals and pets. Social cognition entails the reading of affects, emotions, intentions and subtle reciprocities: all the things that make people fundamentally different to objects. It entails the understanding of a private dispositional world: what people feel and what characterizes their individual inclinations. The sense of shared experience that emerges from reciprocity is captured by the term inter-subjectivity. To a large extent, the emerging sense of shared experience determines the development of social cognition. As we know, inter-subjectivity entails a basic differentiation between

²¹² in Safra, Gilberto, *Hermenêutica na Situação Clínica*, Edições Sobornost, São Paulo, Brazil, 2006 pag 58

the self and others, as well as a capacity to compare and project one's own experience onto another."²¹³

7. Elements of contact in the therapeutic relationship

According to Safra, with whom I continue to share the same ideas, as much concerning the therapist/patient relationship as in the mother/baby relationship, continuing with the explanation above, both relationships produce affection within the following registers:

1. *affective* – The patient coming into contact with the therapist, invites him to be syntonic with his world or to form a complement with it. The therapist is affected by affection, emotions and feelings which allow the understanding of the patient in a wider sense. The therapist is implicated affectively in the relationship with one eye on the work and another on the heart. The mother is implicated in the relationship with her baby especially with the heart and with an eye on intelligence and not in the sense of work.

2. *Empathetic and resonant* – Empathy implicates the therapist in following the patient in the description of his experiences in a way that means collecting them inside himself in a sensory manner, subjectively creating that which is described in his imaginary field. This relationship creates an internal movement in the body, allowing a subjective understanding. In this way, in order for an empathetic communication to exist, the professional must necessarily collect what is provided for him. In the same way that the mother accompanies the baby, needing to be in a state of empathy so that she can collect the needs and non-verbal communication of the baby, we can say that the inverse also

²¹³Rochat, Philippe, *The Infant's World*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, London, England, 2001

occurs, with the baby responding to the communication from the mother in an empathetic manner.

3. *Aesthetic* – a person's corporeity is affected by the way in which an individual inserts himself into the world: the space he occupies, the time and his physicality. In such case, the way in which a patient inserts himself into the therapeutic space, the way in which he occupies it, how he moves – quickly or slowly, for example – or what his personal rhythm is. This all defines or will define his extent and freedom. A patient may be "spacious" to a greater or lesser extent, he may be the owner of the space or he may occupy it in a much more empty sense. His somatic posture is also a determining factor in the way he occupies the space and time. The aesthetic issue is an extremely fertile source in the understanding of signs and meanings. The way in which a mother occupies the space around her baby will be definitive in its formation and development, since the baby will locate itself in counterpoint to the form which the mother occupies in its rhythm and somatic posture.

4. *Discursive or verbal* – Characterized by the representative or argumentative function, in which it can separate what may be an empty discourse from a vital one, if the spoken word is saying something or if they are words lost in space. It is the therapist's responsibility to understand the search for representativity. This register takes place within all development, whilst in the mother/baby relationship it accumulates meaning over the course of time.

8. Doors into the patient's unconscious

The doors at the entry into the patient's unconscious are no longer solely based upon Freudian free association; as we have seen, we have

affection, aesthetics and the word which provokes different replies in different instances arising from the therapist. It is important to discriminate between these different registers to facilitate our understanding, whilst they are important for the signification and re-signification of the individuality of the patients.

Depending upon their education, the people may develop characteristics which may lean more towards one register than to another, upsetting the dynamic balance between them. For example, certain families may place too much importance upon the affective issue, in detriment to thought and the body. Others may place too much value on the body at the expense of affection and thought. Furthermore, a family of intellectuals may possibly place too much value on thought and cognition to the detriment of affection and corporeity.

One of the jobs of the therapist will be to look for a way to re-signify and re-establish the dynamic balance that has been lost in education and development. In this way, we are always working with signs and meanings.

In this text we have seen that, from an ontogenetic perspective, it is possible to simultaneously accompany the growth of semiosis and the creation of awareness. As much in the development of children in early childhood as in relationships between young people and adults and between adults, the process of the creation of semiotics takes place and cannot be separated from the processes of "subjectivation" and the development of awareness.

As Viola writes, we can say that to become a subject is to become a semiotic subject. As we can verify in numerous examples, semiosis and conscience are connected with each other in ontogenetic development.

9. The body and the environment

Christine Greiner²¹⁴ writes that the relationships between the body and the environment are created by co-evolving processes which produce a network of pre-dispositions that are perceptual, motor and emotional and which arise from the learning process.

She says that despite the communication between the body and the environment being involved in a permanent flow of information, there is a rate of preservation which guarantees the unity and survival of the organisms and for each to be alive in the midst of the constant transformation which characterizes live systems. The information seized by our system of perception moves on to become part of the body in a special way: it comes to be the body.

The body becomes not a place through which information simply passes; the body is a result of this intersecting of information in an evolutionary process. Studies of symbolic representation by the authors quoted in the previous chapter work with the hypothesis that we function through the original incorporation of inter-subjective relations.

Viola reminds us that semiose begins in the semiotic field, within an inter-subjective relational field, and can only afterwards become interiorised by the infant) in a conscious manner. The semiotic field precedes the internal mind, but it would be a mistake to see the external world and the individual mind as two separate domains, as there is no clear division between the semiosis of the environment and the consciousness of the individual. What in the beginning can be seen as merely a series of reflex actions then becomes, by way of the constitution of habits and acquisition of meaning in the semiotic field of interpersonal relationships, a living psychological reality.

²¹⁴ Greiner, Christine, *O Corpo*, Ed. Annalube, São Paulo, Brazil, 2005

10. Epilogue

As we near the end of this thesis, I believe I have met my goal of reflecting upon human development within the non-verbal and pre-verbal realms as a means of communication in the formation of a sense of self in the body. I hope to leave a path open for deeper semiotic work to be done on the relationships discussed and that this text can be of assistance in the understanding of human development. I also hope that we can continually reflect upon what can be done to improve the human condition.

The mother/baby research examines a relationship in its most intricate details, and the corporeal therapy clinic places the body in focus. The clinical research removes the patient from the couch and invites movement. The therapist, together with the patient, experiments with the creation of new subjective experience, along a constant path of construction and deconstruction. Dance and rhythm in both relational contexts create potential out of new currents, in an effort to find the desire and feelings of life in the flow of the body.

The studies of mother/baby relationship are the starting point of development as seen in section one. Each of the researchers we reviewed in section two, show us a different perspective for analysing a person's life in body psychotherapy. Each of the perspectives have certain limitations, but it is important to say that in each of them there is a quality useful to clinical psychotherapy.

The studies of a person's development from a body psychotherapeutic point of view led us to analyse how the body behaves and forms itself during education from different methodological perspectives. As we reviewed in section two this 'somatic's form' has responsibility concerning on how the person behaves in life.

From a semiotic perspective each of the researchers in section one showed us how semiosis happens from an intersubjective perspective in a non-verbal communication. Section two showed us how the body can be a subjective icon. This icon could be a window to the life of the inner being.

Icons are crucial in body psychotherapy, because through them a psychotherapist can help a patient to explore, discover and recover meanings of life. In addition, the image gives very approximate clues of what is happening with the person. The more a psychotherapist understands about icons, images and symbols the better he can work and assist the patient.

Semiotic studies can be very helpful to body psychotherapy in all respects including the linguistic. Body psychotherapy might be helpful to semiotics, opening sensibilities for the interpretation of signs at a non verbal level, either by the somatic expression, by images and words.

I would like to take advantage of a funny example outlined by Gerda Boyesen concerning the psychotherapy of a giraffe. She tells of a patient who, after a number of years of therapy, dreamed that he was in Africa with his girlfriend watching some magnificent giraffes.

- Look, he said to his girlfriend, look how they carry their heads so harmoniously and how their movements are so graceful
- But you could do the same! she replied. Try!
- He started to move his head like the giraffes, in order to find the correct position. Suddenly, he found the exact position for himself. Everything put itself into place on its own. He cried:
- What am I doing?
- Now it's really easy, you're doing giraffe's therapy!

Psychotherapy is a way of helping the organism help itself. When the person arrives at a certain level of maturity he can find this help in his daily life and transform it in the best way possible and in the best way for himself.

I would like to end with another poem from the Brazilian poet Manuel Bandeira which very clearly reflects our theme here:

I lie, even when I say I'm lying. My words are always
 'true', hence always 'false'. I am lied by language.
 But in my body, exiled from language, something hurts, something suffers:
 "I speak, and the words I say are a sound; I suffer, and I am".
 If at least this suffering could be told, that is, be dominated
 by the awareness of language! But it remains half-way.
 The suffering said is worn like a mask of the suffering unsaid...

*Minto, mesmo quando afirmo que minto. Meus discursos são sempre
 "verdadeiros", portanto sempre "falsos". Sou mentido pela linguagem.
 Mas em meu corpo, exilado da linguagem, algo dói, algo sofre:
 "Falo, e as palavras que digo são um som; Sofro, e eu sou".
 Se ao menos esse sofrimento pudesse ser dito, isto é, dominado
 pela consciência da linguagem! Mas ele permanece inter-dito.
 O sofrimento dito se fixa como máscara do sofrimento não dito...*²¹⁵

²¹⁵ Bandeira, Manuel, *Antologia Poética*, Ed. do Autor, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1961

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