

## **Correspondencia II**

**Dra. Janine Puget**

y su trabajo:

**“Pioneers’ Re-Encounter;  
History of Argentine Movement of Group Psychotherapy”**

Barcelona, Jul 10, 1989

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Querida Dra. Puget,

Recién me enteré por Hernán Kesselman de que Raul Usandivaras, con quien contaba para el "panel histórico" que coordino en Amsterdam, no podrá asistir al Congreso. Por el relato histórico que con él Uds publicaron en el No. 1 de la Revista de Psicología y Psicoterapia de Grupo soy consciente de que Uds fueron de los pocos grupólogos psicoanalistas hispano-parlantes presentes en Toronto en 1954. Conozco asimismo el importante papel que ambos jugaron en el desarrollo de la Conferedación Latino Anmericana de Psicoterapias Analíticas de Grupo. Raul, me comentó que él podía hablar del desarrollo argentino pero que no sentirse cómodo para hacerlo igualmente del del Cono Sur. Para ello recurrí a Bernardo Blay-Neto de Sao Pablo. Cuento con Ana Pamliega, pero sería de gran ayuda y muy enriquecedor poder contar con sus comentarios, . particularmente en lo que hace a la tercera de las cuestiones que pido a los participantes.

Entiendo con anterioridad que Raul le había comentado a Ud. algo respecto a nuestro panel, pero, aún cuando así fuera, pedirle tan a última hora nos eche una mano es atrevimiento que raya en la desfachatez, que de no ser por el aprieto en que nos coloca la ausencia de Raul nunca me osaría. Caso de no contar Ud. con compromisos previos o más interesanrtes para el miercoles, Septiembre 19 1989 de 10:45 to 12:30, sería para nosotros un gran honor que nos acompañara en el panel. Como Ud. verá por los materiales y correspondencia anterior con los demás miembros la reunión procuraremos mantenerla a nivel de discusión informal. Por supuesto, su aportación no tiene porqué ser por escrito. Pensamos transcribir la discusión y de ser interesante publicarla. De ser así, entonces si le agradecería corrigiera el texto.

Excusandome de nuevo por mi atrevimiento y esperando de su generosidad pueda echarnos una mano. En espera de sus noticias,

Respetuosamente, suyo afmo.

Joan Campos i Avillar

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Xth INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS  
AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS, Aug. 27, Sept. 2, 1989

PIONEERS' RE-ENCOUNTER;  
HISTORY OF ARGENTINE MOVEMENT OF GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

JANINE PUGET \*

The history of groups psychotherapy in Argentina begins during the 40's. It was precisely in 1947 that Pichon Rivière started first groups in a psychiatric hospital held by a small group of therapist. He organises therapeutical groups with hospitalised patients following Shilder's technique. This small group of professionals received the support and contributions of others, and I would name here Drs. Rodrigué, Luchina, Morgan, Resnik and Usandivaras. Shortly after, more professionals gathered around that original group and we formed the "monday group" that at that time was a transformation of our historical begining thince it was enlarged.

In 1954 in Toronto, the IAGP, recognised us as a Society and we formed the Asociacion Argentina de Psicología y Psicoterapia de Grupo (AAPPdeG) (Argentine Association of Groups Psychology and Psychotherapy). It might be underline that this begining concited here with the begining of the International Association that started also in 1948.

A lot could be said about this early beginings and about there later evolution, but I think that history is directed related here with the epistemological problems of groups therapy, and that these problems have forced various schools that developed one of various of their components.

History of group psychotherapy is also related with the failure of classical psychoanalytical treatments, that is individual treatments, particularly in relation with strategies for treatment of psychotic patients, and with institutional problems within psychiatric hospitals. Particularly I refer to difficulty that are created with the personnel in a psychiatric hospital.

Our history also is related with the peculiar argentine traits which is a great interest that is place in the development in Europe and USA. These traits made us aware very repidely of theories proposed by foreign authors and we tried to adapt these theories with a greater or lesser success to the argentine milieu.

This great interest does not have a contreport in the interchanges between institutions to institutions. In this way there are a great number of professionals devoted to group therapy, these are not member of IAGP.

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This development is also related to another Argentine trait which is the great, I would say enormous development and diffusion of every thing that has to do with psychological treatment, being these individual, couple, family or group psychotherapy.

It has to be mentioned also that the social cultural Argentine context has impinged directly on the evolution of group therapy. I am thinking here on certain dark periods in our history in which we had some military government that exercises state terrorism. During these periods, group activity was fought because it was seen as representative of subversion that had to be eradicated.

There are several questions that are pertinent to the subject within the internal structure of group psychotherapy theories.

The group is a structure, a system, a mental body, etc.. Therefore there are several lines that gave place to different developments. The black box is of interest to psychoanalyst but does not interest to systemics?

Is the theory of unconscious, the theory of narcissism and object relations, transference, such as stated by Freud used as he is or as it carried to extension of psychoanalytic theories?

Group psychotherapy is an application of psychoanalysis or is it an enlargement of its field?

Are questions of dramatisations, semantic, causal hypothesis, hypothesis about links constitution being these intra, inter or transsubjective links within the problematic of group psychotherapy?

What is use for therapy, free associations, free behaviour, freely conducted group work, psychoanalytical interpretations, or others techniques?

Do you work with patients, with students, in institutions being these hospitals, company or enterprise, corporation, schools, etc.. with homogenous groups that are meeting for a limited time or a none limited time, even though these are persons that suffered from the same symptomatology or a similar characteristic (for example, parents groups..)?

What is used to reveal the group unconscious, interpretation, starting from a group matrix, unconscious fantasy, the group object, the group configuration, the roles structures, etc..?

Therefore the internal structure of the theories, added to failures of others setting, plus the socio-cultural and political context have to do or influenced of development of group psychotherapy, not only in Argentina but, surely in others countries as well.

According to all that have been mentioned, it can not be an Argentine school or rather several?. Of course there are several because this springs from the diffusion of every psychological theory in Argentina. Group psychoanalysis, psychodrama, gestalt techniques, Balint' groups, etc.. They all have an important body of professional that are supporting them.

Since there are several schools, it will be impossible for me to speak about all of them and therefore as a point of reference the

institution to which I belong that is the Argentine Association for Group Psychology and Psychotherapy. This Institution has gone through various up and downs along its life, starting with great enthusiasm and drive, associated with a publication of a Journal, and afterwards, both due to internal and external factors, had several up and downs. To day it has recover a great strenght and is devotes to teaching, research, diffusion, patients attention. It is divided into several departments. There is a group department that is composed in sections for preparation and research for group psychoanalytical therapy and for group coordinators. There is a department for the third age, for children and adolescent, also for groups, and besides a department for family and another one for couples. These departments have in comon the study of linkage configurations and this is the name of the school that is in function actually.

This very short introduction takes me to try to answer one of the question that Juan Campo had made. Particularly the third question, that is how to explain the relative alienation or this uninterest of latin american movement for the International organisation.

I think the problem here has a double barrow problem. It doesn not seem that there heve be a very easy interchange from the International Institution and promotion as if the South American movement might have been set aside. There does not exist a fluid interinstitutional correspondence, even though there are some Latin American in the board International Institution. These profesionales in general, have had and individualistic behaviour and have not supported any interest for interchange.

On the other hand, it is not seen clearly in Argentina, the significance of belonging to an International Institution, as a source of scientific interchange and instead it would seem that this pertaining is reduced to the payment of an annual fee that in most times, due to the economic fluctuation in our country, becomes very heavy. It does not exist a clear image of the Institution that should collect us all. The Argentine group psychotherapist are not motivated by an international belonging. It is enough to compare the number of members of the International with the actual much larger number of profesional that are really working in the field.

Paradoxally for workers interested in groups, the macro group is composed of isolated cells that maintain or create a certain degree of tension among them. This tension could be stimulating at times but most of the time it is not.

Comparing our Association with the model of International Psychoanalytical Association, the IAGP has a weaker image for the members of the local institution. In the IPA the international membership, is almost automatic, even though it is not mandatory by the by-laws. The local institution take care of the local membership to the IPA and they also are in charge of suscription to the International Journal of that Association.



Just by looking at the Directory published by IAGPI, this problem seems to be not only a South American one since others countries also have a rather reduced number of members.

It seems then, that it is necessary to propose to the board of IAGP that will try particularly to support and stimulate interchanges with the local institutions, and that will find how to motivate belonging to the IAGP.

From another point of view, it is possible that an Institution that will try to group together theories that are divergent, even not compatible, will suffer the consequences related to this incompatibility.

Which or what can be the common core that could get us all together if we are speaking of questions of so different nature?

If, in the other hand, group means plurality, there must be some disassociation between theory and practice. In Argentina each Group Institution, with its own specific orientation does not feel the need to maintain interchange and it is something to be question whether such an interchange would be desirable. I see therefore, it exists here a question that may be we could work together in future congresses or even before through questionnaires and committing particular papers.