

**The Other Form of Leadership: Diagnosis
and containment of the
specialized work group**

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ABSTRACT

The present study deals with the phenomenon of leadership in training groups, or diagnosis groups (D-group). It is generally believed by group therapists that leadership has a resistance function, and, therefore, should be "unconditionally" interpreted in order to help the group develop. However, based on Bion's group theory, the author suggests here to distinguish between basic assumption group leadership (baGL) and specialized work group leadership (SWGL). The emergence of the baGL is the result of splitting and projective identification and has a resistance function. The group creates it to resist the work group. Therefore it should be interpreted. However, the SWGL is on the contrary, the result of the group's defense against the basic assumption group. Interpreting this kind of leadership will have a disastrous effect on the group process and development. Therefore, the author suggests here to refrain from interpreting it, in order to allow the group to devote itself to work group activity. As an illustration of the basic ideas of the present study, the author describes two clinical cases: a failure case, that is, a case wherein the author has attempted to interpret the SWGL, and a successful case, wherein he refrained from interpretation. Finally, the author discusses the reasons of his therapeutic failure and success from the point of view of object relations theory, especially Bion's "container-contained" model.

I. Theoretical Background

Work Group Activity

According to Bion (1961) any group, whatever its nature, size (large or small), constitution, structure and aim, has a basic task that members are expected to perform when they get together. For the task to be performed, each individual is expected, depending on his/her capacity and skill, to cooperate; "cooperation" is regarded thus as a prerequisite for the group

activity. On the other hand, participation in the group activity requires a given period of "training and a capacity for experience" (Bion, 1961; p. 143). Another indispensable characteristic of a group engaged in its task is the fact of being in touch with reality by using rational and, however rudimentary, scientific methods. Therefore, time and development, as elements of the task reality, play also a considerable role in the group activity. It is this way of functioning that Bion calls the "work group" (WG), emphasizing that the term "group embraces only mental activity of a particular kind, not the people who indulge in it" (p. 144). To sum up, a group is described as functioning as a WG if it is characterized by a mental activity which involves focusing on the group's basic task, utilization of scientific and reality-based methods to perform this task, and evaluation of time and development. In order to provide the reader with further details about what he meant by WG, Bion contrasts it with what he called the "basic assumption group".

Basic Assumption Group

According to Bion (1961), although WG activity is indispensable for the group development, it is often "obstructed, diverted, and on occasion assisted, by certain other mental activities that have in common the attribute of powerful emotional drives. These activities, at first sight chaotic, are given a certain cohesion if it is assumed that they spring from basic assumptions common to all the group". (p. 146). These basic assumptions color all the group's activity, and are therefore reflected in the group's (or only in some members') beliefs about most of the group aspects (leadership, organization, planning, etc.).

The mental activity characterized by a basic assumption is called "basic assumption group"(baG). Based on his work with groups, Bion adumbrated

three types of basic assumptions which he named respectively "basic assumption of dependence", "basic assumption of fight/flight", and "basic assumption of pairing".

Basic Assumption of Dependence (baD): The basic assumption shared by the whole group here is the belief and impression that 1) the outside world is unfriendly, and cold, and that 2) the group "is met in order to be sustained by a leader on whom it depends for nourishment, material and spiritual, and protection" (Bion, 1961; p.147). Therefore, the group behaves "as if" the leader is omnipotent and omniscient, and themselves immature, needful, helpless, and unable to do anything by themselves. The group's idealization of the leader (therapist or another group member) results in desperate attempts to get knowledge, help and solutions for their problems in a greedy and never-satisfied way. When the leader fails to meet their needs and expectancy, the group reacts with denial and devaluation of the latter, and search for a new leader who will take the group in charge. As put by Bion (1961), the "leader need not be identified with any individual in the group ; it need not be a person at all but may be identified with an idea or an inanimate object "(p. 155), a bible for example. The group dominated by the baD is characterized thus by primitive idealization, greed, denial, envy, and other defence processes described by Melanie Klein (1955) as characterizing the early psychotic (paranoid-schizoid and depressive) positions.

Basic Assumption of Fight/Flight (baF): Although fight and flight are usually understood as two opposite behaviors, Bion has joined them together conceiving them as two sides of the same coin, or assumption. The group displaying a baF mentality, functions under the assumption that the group has met to fight or flee someone or something perceived as a threat to the group's preservation. Therefore, whether for fighting or for fleeing, action is

indispensable for the baF group. The group sessions are thus more animated; the group atmosphere is characterized alternately by 1) suspicion, criticism, verbal aggression (fight), and 2) passive resistance towards the therapist (or the phantastic ennemy), or withdrawal from the group task in form of long silence (flight), or by engaging in activities unrelated to the group's basic task. The leader is expected to 1) be devoted to the preservation of the group as a whole by ignoring individual reactions 2) to represent and promote courage and self-sacrifice, and be hateful of the enemy. The most prevailing defense mechanisms are splitting (the we-good-group, and the bad-others), and projective identification.

Basic Assumption of Pairing (baP): The assumption shared by the group here is that survival and preservation depends on whether the group is able of self-reproduction by "giving birth" to a new, and a yet-unborn leader, a Messiah (a person, an idea, a plan, a proposition, an utopia). This hoped-for-Messiah is expected to save the group from their anxieties and fears related to the baD and baF. Therefore, when the group is experiencing the baP, one has the impression that the group behaves "as if" it has met for purposes of reproduction. The creation of the Messiah is assigned by the group to two of its members, a pair (not necessary heterosexual). Therefore, unlike in the baD and baF, the group atmosphere is pervaded by an air of hopeful expectation, euphoria, optimism, intimacy, and soft and agreeable feelings.

Besides their differences the basic assumptions have some characteristics in common. They are a result of the group's regression to the psychotic positions described by Klein (1955), and the attempt to evade frustration resulting from lack of thinking capability (Hafsi, 1993; 2000). In contrast to WG, the baG, with its three variations (baD, baF, and baP), is not based on or oriented toward reality, but on and toward fantasy which the group uncritically

acts out. There is also no room for reality-testing, or experimentation in the baG. The baG is also characterized by 1) the fact that the group does not consider the consequences of its behavior, 2) a lack of toleration of scientific or inquiring attitude, 3) an inability to learn from experience, 4) a great insistence on emotions (anxiety, fear, hate, love and the like), 5) a disturbed relationship to time, 6) an hypotrophied capacity for verbal communication (people speak to say nothing or anything, or keep silence.), and 7) a lack of any process of development.

Specialized Work Group

Bion (1961) argues that for a group to be able to display characteristics of the WG activity, it is indispensable to neutralize the baG, that is preventing it from obstructing the work function within the group. He attributes this neutralization function to a subgroup or an individual (within the main group) which he called "specialized work group"(SWG). The SWG, which corresponds to both a function and its holder or actor, consists in undertaking the basic assumption activity in a way that this activity is neither completely inhibited nor strong enough to overwhelm and hinder the work group functioning within the main group. As put by Bion, "it must be regarded as a failure in the specialized work group if the dependent or fight/flight (or pairing) group activity either cease to manifest itself within the SWG or else grows to overwhelming strength. " (p. 157). If the specialized work group fails in its function of neutralizing the basic assumption group of its province, the main group will take over its function while continuing to fulfil the work group function. Since the latter's function consists essentially in translating thoughts and feelings into action, the main group would attempt to translate also the basic assumptions into action, making them even more dangerous in

proportion. The role of the SWG is to carry out the opposite task, that is, translating the action into basic assumption mentality or spirit. This constitutes a much safer method to neutralize the prevailing basic assumption.

Applying this theory to society, Bion considers Church, or Army, to which Freud (1921) has drawn our attention, as subgroups fulfilling the function of SWG. That is, specialized in the baF, the Army takes in charge the baF. The Church, with its organization and structure, takes charge of the baD. While the neutralization of baP is attributed to the Aristocracy, a group to which Freud did not pay attention. Owing to the fact that one of the main preoccupations of this social class is race survival, birth, and hope for continuity and eternity, it makes an ideal SWG for the baP.

It is noteworthy that, in spite of Bion's tendency to have always in mind the therapeutic relationship, and the fact that his group theory was the result of his experience with real small groups, he did not discuss whether these specialized work groups can be observed also in small groups, and what is their role and function. As far as the author knows, the only time he attempted to do it was in a very short paragraph in his *Experiences in groups* (Bion, 1961). He hinted at the fact that specialized work groups can be observed in therapeutic groups, adding that when the group is under the influence of baD, the group tends to "create a subgroup to take the function of interpreting the dependent-group leader —usually located in the analyst— to the group" (p. 158). The fight-flight specialized group fulfils the function of fighting the therapist, and his interventions in forms of interpretations. As to the pairing specialized work group, it will usually help the group to believe that the new idea is not new, but quite familiar to them, in other words it is not the hoped-for-messianic idea.

Of course, as usual, Bion never stated clearly or developed further this idea

concerning the role of the specialized work group in small groups. Therefore, the author's purpose in the present study is to discuss the function of the specialized work group, and the way to deal with it based on his experience as a group therapist and trainer within diagnosis groups, or D-groups, (Hafsi, 1990).

baG Leadership and SWG Leadership

To the author's knowledge, there is practically no study, neither by Bion nor by other researchers, about specialized work groups. As a review of the literature reveals, the principal reason is maybe due the fact that this phenomenon has been studied or referred to using a different concept, namely, leadership. The difference between the bionic concept of SWG and the leadership is that the former refers to both the subgroup as a union of few members of the group, and, on the contrary, the latter refers more to the role or function fulfilled by the leader or leaders than to their personalities.

As discussed in another study (Hafsi, 1990), the phenomenon of leadership is usually interpreted as a group resistance to change. In other words, the leader who emerges from the group is conceived as fulfilling a resistance function (Anzieu et al., 1982). The group creates through an unconscious alliance a leader and assigns him/her to the task of expressing the whole group's resistance. Therefore, most of those researchers (e.g., Ezriel, 1950) who have dealt with leadership tend to conceive of it as a negative group reaction and recommend to interpret it to the group so that it becomes an "agent of group progress" (Anzieu et al., 1982).

In this current of thought, the terms of leader and leadership refer here respectively to the person around whom the group is centered and who really leads the group, and his/her function. This kind of leadership is not

distinguished from another type often observed also in groups. Compared with the former, the latter kind of leadership is less expressive and assertive, but still active enough to be noticed by the whole group and the therapist, or the trainer. Although the group does not manifestly support it (like the former type), it tolerates its presence, and eventually and unconsciously identifies with it. Moreover, it does not occupy a central but a peripheral position, and functions in parallel with the rest of the group. Since the group's activity is not centered around it, its effect on the group activity and development process is therefore not always evident. Clinically speaking, the group displays often an ambivalent attitude towards it, blaming it occasionally for its lack of assertive participation, and praising and supporting it when, occasionally it tries to confront the therapist when perceived as threatening. With the exception of these relatively rare confrontations with the therapist, this kind of leadership is confined to a symbolic presence. However, in spite of its symbolic presence, it often stirs serious counter-transferential reactions in the therapist (Racker, 1948; Heiman, 1950; Little, 1951; Saretsky, 1980; Safan-Gerard, 1991; Safan-Gerard, 1996). Two basic types of counter-transferential reactions are often reported: some forms of anger or hostility, and some forms of boredom. To the group or group members' arrogance or hostility, the therapist or trainer would react by hostility, very often in form of reproaches, criticisms and interpretations, and to the group's emotional withdrawal, he/she would display boredom. When the therapist's countertransferential reaction is excessive, the group-therapist relationship is thus characterized by the *loi du talion* or an *eye-for-eye* mentality. The role of this type of leadership, and the ambivalence of the group towards it, reminds us of some imperial or royal families within their respective large groups.

As mentioned above, this form of leadership is often mistaken for

resistance leadership characterizing the baG, and is regarded as a factor hindering the group process and development, and it is generally suggested that it should be interpreted (Anzieu, 1884; Anzieu, et al., 1982; Béjarano, 1971) for the benefit of the group as a whole. Therefore, based on his experience, the author suggests to make a distinction between two kinds of leadership: on one hand the less active and less assertive leadership which is provided by the SWG and will be referred to here as SWGL (Specialized Work Group Leadership), and, on the other hand, the leadership observed when the group is operating under the influence of baG, referred to here as baGL (Basic Assumption Group Leadership). Moreover, he also suggests that it is the baGL which is the result of the group's resistance to work group, and therefore, it should be interpreted to the group as a whole, in order to help the group get out of the chaos characterizing the basic assumption group. However, he, on the contrary, discommends the interpretation of the SWG, suggesting to let it emerge and function freely. For, its function is to neutralize the baG and, consequently, prevent it from obstructing the WG function of the group by taking the baG in charge. For the SWGL is, as put by Bion (1961), "budded off by the main group" (p. 156) to defend against the baG and be able to display WG functioning.

Dealing with the Specialized Work Group Leadership

Experience with D-groups, has taught the author that when confronted with SWGL, the best reaction is to deal with it in three stages, or steps. Like when dealing with projective identification (Hafsi, 1993 and 1995), in the first stage, or "stage of detection, differentiation and recognition", the therapist or trainer should make sure whether the leadership observed is really a SWGL or not. This is a very difficult task which requires extensive clinical experience with

individual and group therapy, and training. When the therapist is convinced of the SWG nature of the leadership observed, he/she should refrain from interpreting it to the group, and confine him/herself to what Spontnitz (1985) calls "silent interpretation". That is, the therapist should verbalize inside or, generally speaking, say to him/herself that the leadership experienced in the here-and-now is a SWGL. Then, in a second step, or the "containment stage", the therapist should be able to contain it in a bionic sense, and like the group, tolerate it. To put it differently, the therapist should be able to "officialize" it, recognizing its progress-oriented function.

Being able to differentiate a SWGL from a baGL is an important therapeutic step. For if the therapist, for instance, fails to differentiate between the baGL and SWG leadership, and consequently tries to interpret the latter and confront the group, he/she will strip the group of its defensive means against the baG. As a result, it is the group as a whole which will take over the baG function, sinking, depending on the prevailing basic assumption, into dependency, fight-flight and pairing mentality, and consequently inhibiting the WG function. As an illustration of this hypothesis, the author will provide below two cases of D-group. However, before that it is indispensable to discuss first what is meant by a D-group.

Briefly described, a D-group as practiced by the author is a psychoanalytically-oriented training group (Hafsi, 1990; 2000; 2002) composed by up to sixteen participants (trainees, clients or patients), one therapist, eventually one co-therapist, and two observers who do not participate in the group. D-group may be used for two main purposes, one therapeutic and the other educational, and is conducted following four principal rules, namely the rule of substitution, the rule of abstinence, and the rule of non-ommission, or the rule of free and unrestricted speech.

The first D-group described below is an example of when the author was unable to differentiate between a SWGL and a baGL, and the negative effect his intervention had on the group as a whole. The second one describes a case of SWGL and how it was, successfully, dealt by the trainer and the rest of the group .

The Specialized Work Group Leadership Interpreted

The group described below is a D-group constituted by a membership of 16 participants (8 women and 8 men). Like all the D-groups conducted by the author at the university, this one also had an educational aim. The participants, all students in psychology, came to the group as a requirement to obtain the "psychologist diploma". The D-group which lasted three weeks, consisted of 6 sessions of 90 minutes each, with two sessions per week.

The session begun with a long silence. The group was obviously waiting for either the trainer to give them more instructions or for the emergence of a member who can replace him for this task. Then, a chorus of sniffing, loud yawning, and disturbing noises resulting from chair rocking began to invade the room. It was clear that the group was acting out their fear of being engulfed in a vicious circle, and their anger and desire to get out of this painful and stressful situation. The trainer interpreted that the group was trying vainly to "destroy" (break) the group silence by resorting to those nonverbal means, such chair rocking, yawning and sniffing, but this is not going to help the group get out this situation. This was followed by a short silence, then F suggested that they should first introduce themselves to each other. An attempt was made but, the self-introduction did not go further than saying one's name. After this brief and vain attempt to escape from the silence's "claws", the group returned to the initial mental state of inertia or, in Bion's

terms, the baD. After another long and deep silence, and a number of acting outs (sniffing and yawning), D intervened complaining that he and the whole group does not know what the trainer expects them to do and how to do it, that they came to be taught something about groups, and therefore the trainer should be more active in the group by guiding and giving them instructions. He continued addressing the trainer saying that he cannot understand anything, that he tried to think, find a theme to propose to the group, but he can not think because his head is empty, like all the other members. Another member, L, smoothly interrupted him suggesting to talk about why they choose psychology course. This suggestion brought a strong feeling of relief and stimulated the group. The group decided to start talking about what motivated their choice clockwise so that everyone can participate in the group discussion. This allowed the group to get centered around a basic collective task. In other words, the group was beginning to display some aspects of WG functioning. They started thus to express themselves one by one, but when D's turn came he suggested to let the next member speak because he has only a vague opinion, was unable to think and express his opinion clearly. He continues, saying "besides I am sur that it is what the trainer wants us to do...Anyway I want to ask the trainer's opinion about whether the group is on the good truck or not...he knows better than we all do...". The trainer's refusal to answer was naturally accepted, and did not apparently have any effect on the group process, and motivation to continue the discussion. To put it differently, the trainer had the impression that the group was displaying a particular tolerance, especially towards D. For a group which wanted all the members to participate and give their opinions, allowing D to behave counter the group's conscious decision was experienced by the trainer as a contradictory group behavior. For this reason and a

counter-transferential fear discussed later, the trainer was led to interpret D's behavior to the group as the result of an unconscious alliance between the group and D. The trainer confronted the group with (what at that time he thought was) the fact that D was acting the group's resistance to change, and that D was the group's creation and representative. Having in mind Bion's(1961) concept of "dual dependency", the trainer interpreted that since the group's dependency needs could not be satisfied by the trainer, the group, as a result of the unconscious alliance, allowed D to emerge as a leader to display freely his dependency towards the latter, hoping unconsciously that the group's dependency need would be indirectly met in this way. As can be easily guessed here, the trainer was describing Bion's phenomenon of dual dependency in other terms. This interpretation had an explosive effect on the group. For, the group suddenly interrupted the discussion, and the trainer became the focus object of the group for a few minutes; and after deep and heavy breath (showing disappointment), and eye contact between members, L and M intervened saying, almost altogether, that they cannot bear anymore the trainer's attitude, behavior, and interpretative interventions. They were then joined by O who reproached the trainer of being unuseful, unfriendly towards the group, unwilling to help the group, and disturbing or hindering the group process and development. Irritated by these remarks from O and the glare of defiance of the group (especially D), the trainer defended himself saying that he was only performing his role of a trainer as explained in the beginning, that is, reporting to the group what he has felt and understood about the group. This stimulated M who did not express herself until now, she said: "I am not sure but, you're may be performing your function, but each time you say a word, you put the group in this situation (silence)...your interventions turns off the group...it's better if you were not here...I am sure

we can manage without you...You don't do anything for the group...I think it's not only my opinion.. the whole group thinks the same thing". M seemed to be sure of the complicity of the group; and the head shaking by some members proved she was in fact right to believe that. The trainer felt so angry and upset that he decided to cool down plunging into a counterprojective identification silence, feeling empty and helpless like the whole group until the end of the session.

This dependency mentality lasted until the end of the following session (third). After a silence of 30 minutes, L opened the discussion complaining that he does not feel good today, and that he has a bad cold, that he did not eat his breakfast. He added that when he used to live with his family, his mother used to wake him up to eat his breakfast, and now that he lives alone he misses those days, because it is hard to live alone. Four other members (B, C, H, and I) joined him to talk about the difficulties encountered when living alone. This conversation, which although did not obviously interest the rest of the group, was tolerated and lasted until the end of the whole session. One of the members(I) even reported that he was at ease with the silence, that it does not bother him, and that he was not feeling any pressure to speak and participate in the group, adding that silence was not a bad thing after all. The only interventions the trainer did were when he announced the beginning and the end of the session.

In the fourth session, the same subgroup propose to continue the same discussion, but all what they did was repeating what was said in the previous session, under the pretext that the group may have forgotten what was said a week ago. This same conversation between the same outspoken members lasted until another member, A, intervened 30 minutes later, saying that "all the members may have something that they dislike and can never be good at

it, so I want to ask all of you what is the thing that you can not do". Few members spoke about what they can not do, but the interventions were brief and often followed by a long silence. The rest of the group was either sleeping or listening without any reaction. The group climate was characterized by a lack of motivation, lethargy, helplessness, and infantilism. As a matter of fact the trainer had the impression of being in presence of a kindergarden group. In other words, the group presented all the features of a group functioning under the basic assumption of dependency as described above.

This kind of climate lasted until not only the end of the present session but was prevailing also in the remaining two sessions (sessions 5 and 6). The group spent the last sessions trapped into this dependency mentality, and albeit the trainer's interventions (interpretations), was unable to display any of the features characterizing the WG. As to the trainer, it took him a few days of discussion with the two observers to understand the effect his intervention had on the group process, the effect the group had on him, and consequently overcome his feeling of helplessness and decrease in his self confidence.

The SWG Leadership Contained

The following case is an excerpt from a D-group constituted by 15 members (7 male and 8 female students), two observers (male and female graduate students), and the author as a trainer.

The first two sessions were mainly characterized by, in Bion's words, *baG* functioning. There was a long silence at the beginning, with the participants avoiding eye contacts, and displaying the non-verbal means (sniffing, yawning, chair rocking, etc.) usually aimed at destroying the silence, and repetitive verbal wondering (What shall we do ?, How shall we do?, and Does someone have a theme for the group?, etc.). This repetitive verbal wondering, which is

frequently observed in the first sessions, has for purpose the acting out of a group illusion which consists in the desire to "inflate" the group with repetitive meaningless and unproductive verbal interventions in order to "explode" and destroy it (Hafsi, 1999). This phantasy, which leads to "verbigeration", may be the result of the group's inability to develop thoughts and an apparatus for thinking the thoughts, and, consequently its inability to learn from experience (Bion, 1962). The second session ended with a very tense atmosphere. The group was overwhelmed by a visible and general feeling of frustration and abandonment by the trainer. However this feeling could not be verbalized, for neither the group, nor any individual was willing to contain it at that moment.

A third of the time devoted to the third session was a mere continuation of the previous session. That is, the group was still functioning under the baD, namely under the assumption that they can not do anything without the help of the trainer or a leader. Most of the members reported that the more they try to think the more they feel that their "head was empty". The group's need for dependency became so acute towards the end of the session that each movement each verbal intervention from the trainer or a member seemed, as reported by a member in his final report about the group experience, to bring a feeling of relief; relief from the burden of silence and the painful experience of, to use Bion's terminology, "no-thought" and, consequently the lack of a thinking apparatus (Hafsi, 2000). The trainer had the feeling that the group was like a group of open-mouthed little birds waiting to be fed by their mother. Corollary to this baD climate, the group experienced also a feeling of guilt towards themselves and the trainer, owing to their illusive conviction and fear that they had not achieved anything until now, and will continue in this path until the end of the group.

What distinguishes this session from the previous two is the emergence, about 15 minutes before the end of the session, of E as a leader. E who was sitting in front of the trainer, was almost unremarkable until now. With the exception of a brief self-introduction (name and affiliation only), he did not speak, and avoided whenever possible any eye contact with the trainer and other members. However, towards the end of the session he suddenly started to gaze at other members, exchange smiles with them, and then turned to the trainer's imitation and mimicry. He began to imitate the latter's way of sitting, way of speaking, and repeated his interpretations to the group. It was clear that E was provoking and making fool of the trainer. This had a strong effect on the trainer who felt emotionally hurt and confused for a moment. He was taken by surprise, because he did not expect such an acting out from E. He felt like if he was shot in the back. This was even more painful because he had to endure E's behavior until the end of the session.

The group's reaction to E's acting out was ambivalent. He was tolerated because he brought a kind of relief to the group, and a change in the group atmosphere. There were less stress, more laughing, and a stronger cohesion in the group. The group enjoyed E's one-man show, encouraging him from time to time with a smile. However, they also considered him what may be called a "brebis galleuse", and therefore did not want him to prevent the group from devoting its energy to the then burgeoning work activity. For some members had at last proposed discussion topics and the group was discussing how to get all the members to participate and give freely their opinions; the group was displaying at last an embryonic thinking ability.

Hence, the fact of tolerating E's provocative behavior did not mean that the group was identifying with him. On the contrary, it was perceived as a personal problem which concerns only the trainer and E alone. This attitude

of the group towards E became even clearer in the next session.

Similarly, the trainer's feeling towards E was also ambivalent. On one hand, he felt upset and irritated by it, and experienced it as a challenge to his role in the group. On the other hand, he tried to tolerate it, avoiding dealing with it as a group phenomena and interpreting it to the group. For, based on previous experiences, and the positive changes observed following the emergence of E, he had the presumption that the role played by the latter comes closer to that of a SWGL than to an ordinary baGL. That is, E had more a catalytic than a resistance role. As confirmed in the next sessions, he, in fact, took in charge the group's baG to let the WG emerge, helping thus the group to save its energy for the WG purpose.

In the fifth session, another member (J) joined E in order to help him carry out the SWG function. While E continued his imitation and mimicry of the trainer, J devoted himself to verbal attacks or criticism of the trainer and his role, the observers, the way the group was conducted, and the whole education programme of which the D-group was a part. It was clear that the two together were functioning as a subgroup whose function was to take in charge, instead of the whole group, the baF, with J performing the fight and E the flight function.

The group's attitude towards the two, was, like in the end of the previous session, still ambivalent. The group was tolerant towards them; a tolerance which hid also a latent sympathy and support, since the group never tried to confront or show them that their view was not shared by the rest of the group. On the other hand, the group was also suspicious and fearful of them. The group seemed to be afraid of being contaminated by the two, and then became prey again to the baG, that is spending their energy in unproductive activities such as fighting and dependency. This indicated that the group was becoming

able of learning from experience.

Hence, while E and J were fulfilling their SWG function, the group set the group aim. that is, the group decided to find out a topic which would interest everyone and discuss it freely. First, one participant (F) proposed to discuss about what and how N. University should do to improve its image and attract students. Unlike in the previous sessions, the proposition was accepted and all the members were asked to give freely their opinions clockwise. To avoid waiting long time and putting pressure on members, it was decided that if one does not have an opinion he should say it clearly and let the next member express his. The group could thus, at last, find a basic task, (finding ways to improve their university image) around which they could get centred, and a method (expressing one's opinion freely and clockwise) to carry out this task. In other words, the group was displaying the main characteristics of the WG. This WG climate lasted the whole session. With the exception of E and J, the whole group got involved in the task; everyone could express his/her opinion freely without the hesitation and fear characterizing individual interventions in previous sessions.

There was also a remarkable change in the trainer-SWG (E and J) relationship. As a result of the regular discussion (30 to 40 minutes) with the two observers held following each session, the trainer could confirm his impression concerning the SWG function of E and J, and the counterprojective identification nature of his reaction to them. In other words, he realized that his irritation, fear, and anger towards the SWG was in fact the result of a reaction to the group's projective identification, and were not necessarily induced only by the SWG's behavior towards him. Therefore, the trainer became aware of the importance of the role of E and J as SWG, and became progressively less emotional, and further tolerant of their provocative

behavior. In Bion's terms, he became able to, as discussed latter, 1) contain the unwanted splitt off part of the group, represented by the SWG, 2) interpret it by means of silent interpretation, and therefore, 3) allow it to continue to fulfill its catalyst function for the group development, unlike what he did in the case of the first group.

The last session was characterized by further progress. The group continued to function under the dominance of the WG, centred on a new basic task which involved the whole group. The group decided to discuss about what they have learn from the group, and how to apply it for further individual improvement and insight. Although E and J were still playing a special role, the group tried to progressively integrate them, by asking their opinions, paying a little more (but not a particular) attention to what they say, and making no clear difference between them and the rest of the group. Similarly, although E and J's attitude towards the trainer was still somehow characterized by a feeling of suspicion and distrust, their provocative behavior decreased drastically. E ceased his provocatice mimicry, and J his challenging questions and criticism of the trainer. Statistical analysis of the quantitative data, collected using a questionnaire after each session -which can not be discussed in the present study-, confirmed the clinical description made of the sixth sessions of this D-group. It is with this WG atmosphere that the group ended.

DISCUSSION

As a review of the psychoanalytical litterature on the group reveals, leadership is indistinctively conceived as a group phenomenon whose role is to channelize and express the group resistance; it has thus a resistance

function. Therefore, it is generally believed by most analytically-oriented group therapists that, like any form of resistance, leadership should be interpreted to the group, otherwise it will hinder the group process and development. However, in the present study the author argued that this is only partially true, and does not necessary apply to all kinds of leadership. Based on Bion's group theory, the author suggested that what is meant here by leadership with a resistance function corresponds to the leadership observed when the group is operating under the influence of the baG. The author distinguishes this kind of leadership, or the baG leadership (baGL) from the one displayed by the SWG, or the SWGL. The latter is the result of the group's attempt to defend itself from the baG. The group allows the emergence of this kind of leadership so that it takes in charge or neutralize the baG, allowing thus the group to devote itself to the WG activity. Unlike the baGL the SWGL is an agent of progress, and a catalyst; its presence and role is indispensable for group development.

Based on his long experience with groups, and Bion's theoretical suggestions, the author argued that the SWGL should not be interpreted to the group, but rather should be tolerated, and interpreted only by means of silence interpretation. Failure to distinguish between these two kinds of leadership, and deal with them indistinctively as group resistances, will have a destructice effective on the group process. To illustrate this idea the author used two examples from D-groups. In the first one he failed to recognize the SWGL and interpreted it, causing the group to return to the baG functioning. On the contrary, in the second group, the author succeeded to recognize the SWGL and dealt with it adequately, allowing the group to devote its energy to the WG activity.

Seen from an object relational point of view, the emergence of both the

baGL and SWGL is a result of the group splitting and resort to projective identification. Like in the case of an individual splitting unwanted "bad" part-objects, the group experiencing the baG also splits off unwanted or "bad" members which contains resistance and aggression, making of them, depending on the available leadership, agents of resistance (baGL), or agent of progress (SWGL).

In the first clinical case discussed here, the group split off and attempted to project the unwanted member D and the latent aggressive and destructive impulses he embodied. However, to use Bion's model of container-contained (φ - β), as a φ the trainer failed to contain the SWGL provided by D. He was unable of what Bion calls *reverie* and negative ability, namely, "capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts without any irritable reaching after fact and reason (Bion, 1970; p. 125), and without fear. The trainer's unconscious fear of the group's greedy demand (as expressed by D) especially his fear of being unable to meet them, and consequently running the risk of becoming object of devaluation, aggression and destruction, led the trainer to defend himself resorting to interpretations. He uses interpretations to reject and return to the group their projected aggressivity unprocessed, and even transformed into a nameless or a meaningless aggressivity. As reported later by some members, the group did not understand why the trainer was confronting and blaming them. Each intervention was experienced as, to used one of the members expression "a bomb which falls to destroy all what the group was trying to do". Moreover, the trainer's interpretations were also experienced unconsciously by the group as a confirmation of the "badness" of the splitt-off part, namely, D, and consequently, a confirmation of the necessity to continue dealing with him by means of projective identification. Like in the case of the child and a mother unable of containment described by Bion

(1962), the group kept evacuating its resistance and aggressivity through D. Moreover, like the ♀ unable to contain the child's fear in Bion's model, the trainer was introjected as a bad object hostile to projective identification as a means of communication, and, owing to the group's projection, as a bad envious and greedy object. Consequently, the trainer and the group remained trapped into a vicious circle without no hope for escape until the end of the group.

The second case is, on the contrary, an illustration of how the SWGL can be dealt with successfully. Unlike in the case of the first group, the trainer was able to contain it, and consequently, help the group to display WG functioning and develop. That is, the trainer could recognize the emergent leadership (provided by E and J) as a SWGL and deal with it effectively as such. The trainer was thus able to display *reverie*, and negative ability. That is, he was able to face it without fear, irritation, or anger, tolerate it, process and understand it resorting to silent interpretation, until the group could finally reintegrate it as a "better", less frightening, less destructive, and acceptable object. Applying Bion's model further, as a container the trainer could transform the leadership which, at the beginning was treated as a beta-element, into an alpha-element, useful for thinking, learning from experience, and development.

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