

Article

The Lost Roots of the Theory of Group Analysis: ‘Taking Interrelational Individuals Seriously!’

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This paper is a micro-historical analysis of unpublished drafts of S.H. Foulkes – intended to be part of his ‘Theory Book’ on group analysis – together with a comprehensive new historical reading of Norbert Elias’s published writings relevant to group analysis, focusing on two lost roots of the theory of group analysis: (1) Elias’s discovery of the simultaneous-interdependent process of ‘Individualization and Socialization’, and (2) Foulkes’s innovative conception of the ‘mind as a multi-personal phenomenon’. This analysis forms the main argument of this paper – that the theory of group analysis ‘takes interrelational individuals (in the plural) seriously’, not the reified concept of ‘The Individual’ nor the abstract concept of ‘The Group’. It is proposed that Foulkes’s conception of the individual’s mind ‘as a multi-personal phenomenon’ is compatible, albeit, preceded Mitchell’s ‘relational’ conception of ‘multiple selves’.

Key words: group of interrelational individuals, individualization through socialization, micro-history, multi-personal minds, multiple selves

The Argument¹

Norbert Elias and S.H. Foulkes took ‘modern individuals’ seriously and not ‘The Group’ as Farhad Dalal (1998) argues. Their legacy was to save individual human beings from twofold dangers: the ‘ritual of the *pristine individual*’ and the ‘worship of *groups*’, both characterizing different facets of modernity. Throughout the mid-

1930s, in the library of the British Museum, Elias conducted comprehensive research in order to study the psycho-social-historical origins of modern individuals in the course of the 'civilizing process'. Furthermore, he inquired into the specific historical and ideological conditions underlying the establishment of modern psychologies – especially psychoanalysis – which were based originally on the conception of 'The Individual' (in the singular) as a closed entity, that is to say: the model of the 'closed man' (or 'Homo Clausus' in Elias's scholarly Latin). Based on his studies, Elias argued for a different, more realistic and more scientific conception of individuals (in the plural). And in his own words: 'open entities with open valences of bonding to other individuals'. That is to say: a model of 'open people', 'Homines Aperti' (Elias, 1969).

The new paradigm developed by Norbert Elias aimed to weave together the mental, social and historical, while keeping them intact! It was one of the earliest interdisciplinary studies carried out in the 20th century, trying to overcome the old paradigm, which studied the individual (psychology) and the social (sociology) separately, and both of them apart from the generational and historical specific conditions in which they evolved (history).

Foulkes (1938) was fascinated by Elias's discoveries and revolutionary conceptions of modern individuals, and weaved it into his new revolutionary psychotherapeutic practice. The simple basic idea went like this: if people live from birth on as interrelational open entities with open valences of bonding, and if individuals are thoroughly socialized and individualized at the same time, and if during this process they are liable to produce psychopathological conditions, then we *not only may, but must*, assemble them in a therapeutic group in order to treat them.

Elias Stands on Freud's Shoulders

The main argument which Farhad Dalal postulated, as though there was an orthodox Foulkes (springing from Freudian individualism) and a radical Foulkes (stemming from Eliasian social orientation) is a fallacy, based on a partial reading² of Norbert Elias's enormous corpus of writings, and especially of not even alluding to his essential and indispensable books and articles so relevant to group analysis. Dalal missed, then, the fundamental essence of Elias's

project – namely: the complex, interdisciplinary inquiry into the building blocks, which constitute *individuals* of our modern era.

In a nutshell – Elias's thrust and driving force for his major investigations was to explore the course by which people in the west became *more and more individualized* during the civilizing process. This is the reason why Elias's starting point sprung right from the discoveries of Sigmund Freud, which dealt primarily with the mental structures of modern individuals. In fact one can see Elias's studies as a 'footnote' to, or 'correspondence' with, Sigmund Freud.

By a careful reading of Elias's *magnum opus* 'The Civilizing Process' (2000) one finds a footnote which refer to Freud's discoveries, written with the wit characterizing Elias' style of writing:

In this connection [the socio-genesis of the superego] it scarcely needs to be said, but is perhaps worth emphasizing explicitly, how much this study owes to the discoveries of Freud and the psychoanalytical school. The connections are obvious to anyone acquainted with psychoanalytical writings, and it did not seem necessary to point them out in particular instances, especially because it could not have been done without lengthy qualifications. Nor have the not inconsiderable differences between the whole approach of Freud and that adopted in this study been stressed explicitly, particularly as the two could perhaps after some discussion be made to agree without undue difficulty. (2000: 527)

A Constructive Critique of the Reified Concept of 'The Individual'

The main issues Elias and Foulkes dealt with were derivatives of problems concerning the freedom and well-being of modern individuals in the 1920s and 1930s facing fascism and its mass psychological phenomena, and not primarily with problems concerning group dynamics. And even if Foulkes named his new method 'group analysis' – which discovered and explored specific group-analytic factors – it was in essence a method for treating individuals (in the plural), not 'the individual', nor 'the group'. That is to say a space and manner of practice for healing individuals who lost their individuality, or personal identity in the tangle of their psychopathology or life crises. Just recall the paradox of the last words closing the *Introduction to Group-Analytic Psychotherapy* (Foulkes, 1948: 170):

A good group, however, breeds and develops, creates and cherishes that precious product: *the human individual*. (Italics in the original)

This quotation raises some important issues:

- Product of what?
- Who produced this precious product?
- Where and when has this precious product been constituted?
- What were the socio-psycho-historical conditions necessary for the developmental trajectory of the ever-growing phenomenon of 'individualization' in western cultures?
- Is 'individualization' the real fundamental characteristic that defines men and women of our time?
- What is the relationship between the social pressure for increasing acceleration of 'individualization' and modern psychopathology, and what is the place of group psychotherapy in offering a remedy for these pressures?

All these questions were Norbert Elias's research aims. He wrote explicitly about these subjects in his celebrated book *The Society of Individuals*³ (1991) which Farhad Dalal did not mention. The short title of this book tells the whole story. It is not 'Society and Individuals', it is not 'Individuals in Society', and it is not, even as Group Analysts tend to say, 'Society in Individuals'; it is: 'Society of⁴ Individuals', and in the original in German: '*Die Gesellschaft der Individuen*'.

The Simultaneous-Interdependent Process of 'Individualization' and 'Socialization': The First Root of Group-Analytic Theory

In order to place this book and stress its importance for my argument, I will quote from a conversation between Dennis Brown (1997) and Norbert Elias, which took place in November 1989 in Amsterdam. Elias was then 92 years old, a year before his death.

Dennis Brown: Tell me, in what way do you feel your expertise in sociology influenced Foulkes? Were there ideas of yours that he took over directly?

Norbert Elias: From early days on I tried to overcome the language which forced us to speak as if individual and society, individual and group are different and opposed entities. I don't know whether you know the book *Die Gesellschaft in⁵ Individuen* – it has not yet appeared in English but it is about to be translated.

DB: No. Unfortunately I don't speak German. Your book *The Civilizing Process*, as it was called in English, is of course well known.

NE: Yes, that is *the theoretical interest which Foulkes was interested in* (my italics). It comes out indirectly, that is to say *the very idea of the civilizing process implies that the individual is thoroughly socialized and individualized at the same time* (my italics). What was for me a new discovery was that I could show how the social norms change and if one translates this from the abstract to social norms in human terms, *one must also say that the individuals change* (my italics), individuals in different generations grow up with somewhat different social rules, you can see it in the freedom of the younger generation today compared to that with my youth. So I think it was this knowledge that *individuals can only be understood in groups and groups only as groups of individuals* (my italics) . . . I do not know to what extent even today is still in group-analytic theory used, that one sees the individual and the group as two levels in the group. That was one of the things which I brought in, as it were, and later turned out in group-analytic treatment wanders from the group level to the individual level and from the individual level to the group level, both having roots in the focus of one's attention.

DB: A sort of foreground/background dialectic . . .

NE: Yes, *I am not quite clear whether I would see it foreground/background but I want to have it on an equal level so there are two levels of equal weight* (my italics). And thoughts of this time can be found in the first part of '*The Society of Individuals*' . . .

DB: I look forward to reading it.

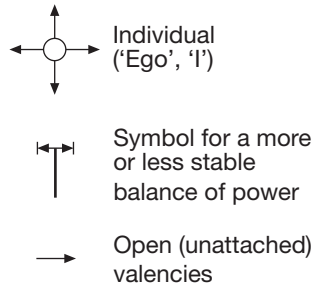
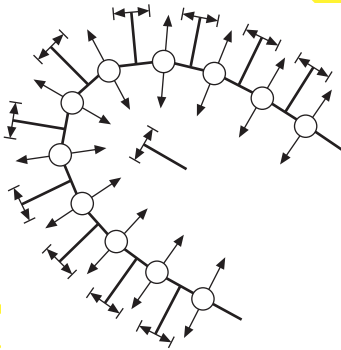
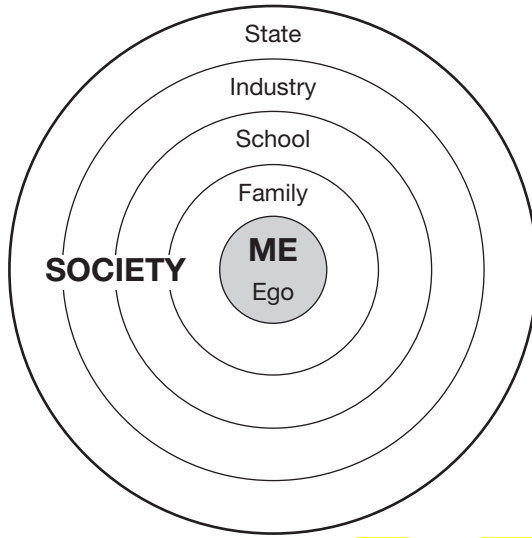
NE: We [Foulkes & Elias] were very much at one, that *we did not want to reduce one to the other, nor did we want to dissolve* (my italics), so that was, I think, even before we earnestly talked with similar inclination. (Brown, 1997: 518–19)

. . .

DB: . . . It was quite striking, even ideas like the individual as a nodal point, a sort of intersection in a web, like a neuron in the nervous system.

NE: Yes, I had already at that time developed instead a concept of figuration in one of my first books, *What is Sociology?* human beings form figurations. The image which you gave with the neuron metaphor is contained in individual figuration. *If one says 'a group' one has difficulties to say 'a group of individuals' and I was looking for a word which would make it possible just to say that. A figuration of individuals, or if you prefer to say, configuration of individuals* (my italics), that came very near to what Foulkes needed. That is – I have in '*What is Sociology?*' a slight picture⁶ which show the naïve perspective of the individual in which she or he is in the center of the group and then an act of detachment or distancing is necessary in order to see oneself as one among others, and that is what I wanted to express with the term figuration. (Brown, 1997: 520)

I refer now to the diagrams to which Elias drew our attention –



[From Norbert Elias's book 'What is Sociology?' (Oxford: 1970). I attached these diagrams (which Elias called 'picture' to the text) while quoting from the conversation, in order to give us the full feel of Elias's new paradigm in the Human Sciences; as expressed in the old saying: 'a picture is worth a thousand words' (see endnote 6, for some elaborations).]

NE: I think that was the basic attitude which we [Foulkes and Elias] shared

where, as I say, I think I could help a good deal, because I was quite clear that in society at large the separation of individual and society was in part due to the fact that different parties accentuate differently. The right the individual, and the left the group and *one carries these values of a partisan conviction into the theory* (my italics), which is not very good . . . I was very much interested in ideologies and this is the item I brought into our community – that as long as society at large is split in terms of the basic views giving individual and society different values, one speaks and thinks as if individual and society had a different existence, and that is beginning I think to change. One can at least hope that it is now nearing the end of this division.⁷

DB: Well, I hope very much to have a copy of your book when it is published. . . who is going to publish your new book?

NE: Blackwell. . . . They have also published in English . . . is it *The symbol Theory: Theory Culture and Societies*?⁸ But for your purposes I think *The Society of Individuals* . . . which got the Amalfi prize in Italy, for the best sociological book of the year. So I was quite proud. (Brown, 1997: 522–3)

Dennis Brown's last conversation with Norbert Elias is a momentous document and a milestone for precisely locating the 'first missing root' for reconstructing the theoretical foundation of group analysis. If we read it carefully, and if we read fully and extensively Elias's writings, we are able to comprehend that Elias had not criticized Freud for not having a social theory of people, nor did he disavow him for focusing on individuals. On the contrary, he honoured Freud for his discoveries concerning the individual psyche, yet he saw himself as complementing its social-historical origins. Definitely, Elias's vision was a challenge to Freud, yet its aim was not to put society or groups as alternatives to the human individual, but to study further, comprehensively and more deeply, the phenomenon of individuality. Therefore the genuine discoveries of Elias are indicating the fact that individuality is a process embedded in society with a specific history, and so every child in our evolving society is 'thoroughly individualized and socialized at the same time'.

S.H. Foulkes's Innovative Conception of the Mind: the Second Basic Root of Group-Analytic Theory

Let us now turn to Foulkes. Despite the fact that we cannot talk directly with him, I would like to share with you the archival work I am carrying out, in order to 'converse' with Foulkes's materials and go on to uncover the second lost root of group-analytic theory.

If, in Elias's case, I conducted an historical reading of published material, then in Foulkes's case I am performing a micro-historical analysis of unpublished documents and trying to integrate both in my main argument. Parenthetically, we should not forget the fact that S.H. Foulkes intended to write a 'Theory Book' together with Norbert Elias. He was certainly aware of his need for Elias as far as theory was concerned. But it's also true that Foulkes not only had theoretical difficulties in establishing an explicit theory alone by himself, he also had political difficulties as a result of his being part of the therapeutic disciplines. Elias, as opposed to the other founding fathers/mothers of the 'Group Analytic Society', was the only one coming from a different discipline, i.e. Social Sciences. This fact helped him to go beyond the boundaries of the traditional division between the disciplines of psychology, sociology, anthropology and history, which deal with human beings from different perspectives. Thus, Foulkes brought Elias into the Society and with him the true, fresh and fertile spirit of interdisciplinary thinking and research.

Foulkes's literary 'remains' are kept in the Wellcome Archives for the History and Understanding of Medicine in London. In what follows, one can find decisive proof for Foulkes's struggle with the concept of the 'individual mind'. It shows again, without doubt, that the main issues that interested Foulkes were topics concerning the mental structures of individual people and not predominantly themes concerning group dynamics. It is possible to see directly and lucidly how Foulkes improvised with his ideas while writing journal articles or books relating to the community of group psychotherapy. His main contribution was still somehow to blur his primary concern with individual minds by means of emphasizing the mediatory concept of the 'Matrix'. The following items are extracts from drafts that S.H. Foulkes wrote in 1969 but never published. He gathered some material, including these drafts, for the planned 'Theory Book', which was in preparation when he died in 1976. The fact that Foulkes himself prepared the following documents for use in his planned 'Theory Book' gives extra validation for my thesis. The extracts are printed in their original form. First I will present the transformations of the title in different drafts and then part of the content itself, looking into the significance of the small changes made before the final product. I have arranged the titles of the drafts in three stages:

Stage 1

22.10.69

Dr. Foulkes

Some Notes on my Concept of the Mind as a Multi-personal
or better still transpersonal phenomenon.

S. J. FOULKES

Stage 2

The group as matrix - In
Wolberg & Schwartz (eds) Group
Therapy 1973

October, 1969.

Some Notes on my Concept of the Mind as a Transpersonal
Phenomenon.

by S. J. FOULKES

Stage 3

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

**The group as matrix
of the individual's mental life**

Chapter in L. R. Wolberg and E. K. Schwartz (eds), *Group Therapy
1973—An Overview* (New York: Intercontinental Medical Book Corpora-
tion, 1973).

From these excerpts one can see that Foulkes didn't dare, and wasn't yet ready in 1969 or 1973 to publish his theory of the mind which was so essential to group analysis. For, if the human mind is from the outset 'multi-personal', and if you assemble people in a group, then a multi-personal 'group matrix' is being generated as an indispensable outcome of the characteristics of the participants minds. Only in the 1990s, psychoanalytic theoreticians, like Stephen A. Mitchell, dared to introduce the revolutionary concept of

'multiple selves', devoting a separate chapter named: 'Multiple Selves, Singular Self', in his book: *Hope and Dread in Psychoanalysis* (Mitchell, 1993) (for further elaboration see below and in endnote 11).

The fact that in the published version (1973) Foulkes had put the accentuation on 'the group as matrix of the individual's mental life' and not on 'the mind as a multi-personal/transpersonal phenomenon' speaks for itself. He utilized part of the material in the published version, as can be seen in his *post factum* remark on the draft from 1969 written in his handwriting in step 2: 'used in "The gp as matrix" . . . In Wolberg & Schwartz (eds) *Group Therapy 1973*'. Note that this *post factum* remark written after 1973, demonstrates the fact that Foulkes was dealing with these drafts during the three years preceding his death, preparing them for his book on theory. And nevertheless, Foulkes's (1973) published article 'The Group as Matrix of the Individual's Mental Life' became a keystone in the latest efforts, during the late 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, for widening the scope of the theoretical aspects of group analysis (see for example Brownbridge, 2003 and Stacey, 2001a, 2001b).

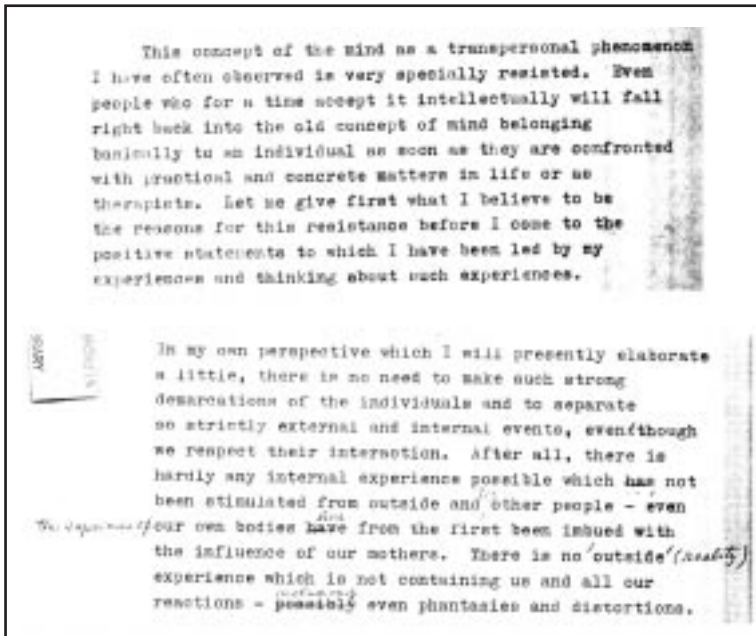
Let us now delve more deeply into the matter just to see Foulkes's theoretical moves concerning: (1) The strong – and hard to refute – conception of the mind belonging basically to an individual; and (2) his strong conviction that our minds (and bodies) are embedded in the outside world, and have been constituted from introjecting the experience we accumulate during our lives. So let us look at this important unpublished material (see following page).

Now, isn't it amazing to read Foulkes as though he is a contemporary relational, inter-subjective thinker? Well, maybe yes, maybe no! We can assume that Foulkes was very much in contact, in the early 1960s, with the rigorous method of infant observations developed and carried out in London by Esther Bick. The paragraph from the 1969 draft –

After all, there is hardly any internal experience possible which has not been stimulated from outside and by other people – even the experience of our own bodies has from the first been imbued with the influence of our mothers. There is no 'outside' (reality) experience which is not containing us and all our reactions – including even phantasies and distortions' . . .

is evidence for this assumption.

It is well known that Foulkes was always occupied with the



phenomenon of 'introjection' during his activities in the 'London Psychoanalytic Association'. This was a theoretical direction in line with Esther Bick's findings, and opposite to the centrality of 'projection' prevailing in Melanie Klein's theories.

R.D. Hinshelwood (1989) in his celebrated *A Dictionary of Kleinian Thought* wrote under the entry of 'Esther Bick':

Bick's most significant observation concerned the infant's passive experience of being held together by an external object sensed through the skin sensations. . . this first object binds the personality together and has to be introjected in order to give a sense of space into which introjections can be put. The view that the experience of an internal space is one that is acquired, through adequate experience, contrasts with the idea of an innate experience of internal space implied in Bion's theories. (pp. 230-1)

So we see very clearly that in spite of the fact that Foulkes acknowledged the 'mind' as an asset of the 'cherished and precious individual human being', he understood the constitution, development and preservation of this phenomenon as a multi-personal process. If the phenomenon of 'mind' is multi-personal - let alone

the phenomenon of ‘individuated selves’.⁹ And if becoming an ‘individuated self’ is a complicated and sophisticated progression based on sociogenetic and psychogenetic complementary processes, then the intertwining of Elias’s and Foulkes’s discoveries about human beings, their minds, personality structures and selves, are a *sine qua non* for building a coherent theory for group analysis.

To end this part of the paper dealing with Foulkes’s innovative conception of the mind, I will comment on ‘Mind’ (Foulkes, 2003). In the preface to this short paper Malcolm Pines writes:

I found this short paper by Foulkes when looking through some old files. I cannot put it into context, as I have no other notes. I have asked Elizabeth Foulkes if she could provide a context for this, but she also is unable to do this. It occurs to me that this may have been part of the book on theory that Foulkes was preparing in his last years. (p. 315)

This short paper holds some philosophical ideas about the cultural origins of the mind and complement the unpublished drafts I had found in the Archive. Moreover, Foulkes refers in this paper to the work of Desmond Morris’s *The Naked Ape* and *The Human Zoo* from 1967 and 1969 respectively. Notice that the drafts I have found dates from the same period (1969), and had been prepared by Foulkes to be used in the planned book on theory. Another amazing thing about this compatibility is the fact that I presented my micro-historical research for the first time in August 2003 at the International Congress of Group Psychotherapy in Istanbul. Malcolm Pines (2002) attended the lecture and referred during the discussion to a short paper he had found in his files – on the topic of ‘Mind’ – which was soon to be published. Thinking about it, I see this chain of events not as a mere coincidence but as an ongoing enterprise – across generations – to discover the undeclared paradigm and the hidden roots of the theory of group analysis. In this context I see Olov Dahlin’s paper (2003): ‘Group Analysis Has No Theory! Foulkes Failed Us. Did He?’ as suffering from the same weaknesses as other papers on Group-Analytic Theory, which lean only on published material. Dahlin’s words reflect this problem:

What Foulkes provided was a theory in an elementary stage, *a mental view* [italics in original] rather than a systematic statement of principles. When he did attempt this, as in his last book (Foulkes, 1975), he has not got much further than in his first (Foulkes, 1948). (Dahlin, 2003: 375)

We see how Dahlin refers to Foulkes last book as if it were a

theory book. The fact is that this last published book dealt primarily with technique, and meant to be ‘a twin’ to the unpublished theory book.

Sociogenesis and Psychogenesis: The Dual Theoretical Bedrocks of Group Analysis

Elias’s and Foulkes’s sociogenesis and psychogenesis of the human mind are the two bedrocks on which the theory of group analysis stands. Malcolm Pines grasped it intuitively in his article ‘The Coherency of Group Analysis’ (2002) (see also endnote 9). Pines wrote briefly on this matter in the abstract to his paper:

The coherency of group analysis is both internal and external. Formation of *individuated selves* (my italics) is fundamentally a social-historical process (Elias, 1978) affected by caregiver interaction constituted through language (Bakhtin, 1981; Vygotsky, ref. Wertsch, 1991). (Pines, 2002: 13)

We are closing a circle. Elias gave Freud’s meta-psychology a spin by introducing the process of ‘sociogenesis’ recapitulating in the process of ‘psychogenesis’. As a continuation and critique of Freud’s hypotheses about the mythological-genesis (Oedipus) recapitulating in the psychogenesis of the superego, Elias’s discoveries extended Freud’s ground-breaking way of thinking, to the whole psycho-social-historical genesis of modern individuals: comprising their whole psyches with ego functions, self images, emotions and the unconscious. Elias created this paradigmatic revolution at the end of Freud’s life with the inspiration of his contemporary friend S.H. Foulkes, one of the earliest psychoanalysts who gave culture a fundamental place in the formation of the human self. Elias and Foulkes formed a circle of interdependent influence so creative that we are still struggling to completely work it through.

It now becomes clear that the legacy of group analysis was, still is and always will be ‘to take *interrelational individuals* seriously’, not the reification of ‘*the individual*’ nor the abstract concept of ‘*the group*’. What happens in group-analytic psychotherapy derives directly from the gathering of these individual minds, which are multi-personal or transpersonal from the outset, before they assemble into a group. Foulkes developed this therapeutic situation before he formulated a coherent theory of the mind in health and in sickness. This was his strength and weakness. But he left us enough

traces in his published material and evidence in his literary remains, in order to complete his lifelong project.

Conclusion and a Glance to the Future

Foulkes never reified '*the group*' nor '*the individual*'. He always looked at the 'group-analytic situation' composed of '*interrelational individuals*'¹⁰ who came to treat their psyches. If one wants to turn my argument into a recommendation, it could go like this: If you take individuals seriously, send them to group-analytic psychotherapy, in order to treat their '*multi-personal minds*' (or '*multiple selves*'¹¹) and to participate in a healing process of *individualization* and *socialization* in the same place, at the same time.

Research needs to be done concerning the reconstruction of the theory of group analysis as near as possible to Foulkes's planned book. I believe the methods, deriving from the interdisciplinary approach of 'history and philosophy of science and ideas', is the proper way for carrying out this job. Foulkes (1938) was among the first to review Elias's work when it appeared in the late 1930s. He pleaded with his colleagues, the psychoanalysts, to take into consideration the historicity and the cultural foundations of the human psyche. But they remained mute. Now, after 65 years, following the 'relational and intersubjective turn' in psychoanalysis (see endnotes 10 and 11) – based primarily on the 'cultural and linguistic turn' in post modernity – we can witness how Foulkes preceded his time when he internalized and digested Norbert Elias's findings and insights, which were themselves (!) the very first origins of this 'cultural turn' in the human sciences (the new paradigm based the primacy of culture and language over the subject), culminating in the second half of the 20th century. And finally let us not forget Foulkes's prophetic/revolutionary words from his Chairman's address to the Medical Section of the British Psychological Society in 1961, published as: 'Psychotherapy in the Sixties' (1964):

The work of Freud and of psychoanalysis in the broad sense, has dominated the first half of this century. Its contributions will remain of paramount importance for all future progress. . . . Modern research shows [however], that much of what appeared to be biological inheritance is in fact cultural inheritance transmitted socially. . . . I have stressed the existence of a network of interaction, in which everybody tries to solve the conflicts common to all in interdependence with the others . . . our work is indeed difficult, but is intensely rewarding. All signposts – unless there is total destruction – point to such rapid development that, *looking*

back from the year 2000 [my italics], the first half of the twentieth century might well appear as remote as do the middle ages to us. (pp. 153–4)

Acknowledgements

I express my gratitude to the Wellcome Institute for the History and Understanding of Medicine for being so kind in welcoming me and assisting me in my research. The majority of the personal documents belonging to S.H. Foulkes were deposited in the 'Contemporary Medical Archive Centre' by his widow Elizabeth Foulkes in 1991, for the purpose of scrutiny, study and research.

Notes

1. My argument in this paper is based on extensive interdisciplinary research which I am conducting – with 'The Cohn Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas', Faculty of Humanities, School of Philosophy, Tel-Aviv University – towards a doctoral thesis.
2. My reading is a 'historical reading' taking both the cultural-historical climate that prevailed at the time Elias and Foulkes thought and acted, and a 'micro-historical analysis' of documents, which were discovered in the Archives.
3. This book has an unusual and peculiar history on the verge of a 'detective story'. Roger Chartier the eminent French historian, director of the 'Ecole des Hautes-Etudes en Sciences Sociales', Paris, wrote in his book *On the Edge of the Cliff: History, Language, and Practices* (1997):

The Society of Individuals was written as part of a lengthy summary that concludes Elias's major work, *The Civilizing Process*, published in Basel in 1939. For reasons he never explained, however, Elias removed this text when his book was in the proof stage, sent to a Swedish journal to be published separately, the text instead remained unpublished and the review never saw the light of day. It was not until 1983 that it was revised and reproduced and circulated at the University of Stockholm, and not until 1987 that it became easily accessible. Its importance within Elias's work is nonetheless capital, because it outlines the theoretical bases for his analyses in *The Civilizing Process*. (p. 107)

4. Babylon Dictionary: 'OF' = belonging to; characterized by.
5. Please note the amazing 'slip of the pen': 'IN' instead of 'DER' in German, which means in English, OF. The usual prevailing thinking and expression in group analytic circles is: 'Society inside Individuals', as the notion: 'The individual is social through and through'. So, even Dennis Brown and the editing of this conversation in *Group Analysis* fell into the same trap. Again it is an example of how difficult it is to go beyond the opposition between individual and society, and to understand modern society as a 'society of Individuals', society which consists of ever growing individualization of its members.
6. The diagrams illustrate the new paradigm Elias so eagerly initiated and promoted: A paradigm, which conceives the human world not in the language that separate 'Individuals' and 'Society', but as a human world of interdependent individuals forming figurations ('web structures') with each other. Note the

metaphoric use of the concept of 'valence', derived from chemistry, to point to the attachment characteristics of individuals towards each other. Elias used this concept as early as 1937, years before Wilfred Bion (1961) used it to denote the group dynamics of the basic assumptions. It's the same metaphoric concept for different ideas. However, the use of the chemical concept of valence in the human sciences deserves more elaboration for another occasion.

7. In this context, I would guess that Dalal fell into the trap of ideology, thus fighting individualism while praising the group.
8. This book, *The Symbol Theory* (Elias, 1991b) was Farhad Dalal's main book for his construction of a post-Foulkesian theory based apparently on Elias. As we see, Elias (and Foulkes) theory of group analysis was based on another book, *The Society of Individuals*, which is by its title and content a critique of conceptions derived from modernity, but not a post-modern theory in the current sense, which deconstructs the human subject.
9. This term is slightly elaborated in Pines recent article 'The Coherency of Group Analysis' (2002), referring to Elias and Foulkes.
10. The phrase 'Relational Individualism' was first introduced by Nancy J. Chodorow (1986) in an article by the name: 'Towards a Relational Individualism: The Mediation of Self through Psychoanalysis'. Nancy Chodorow is both a professor of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley and a faculty member at the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute. Her simultaneous involvement in those two disciplines gives her an intellectual perspective somewhat similar to the views Elias and Foulkes held, albeit, three decades before.
11. It is a topic for a separate paper, tracing the 'history of the ideas' about the nature of the human 'mind' or 'self'. Yet, how amazing it is to see the late Stephen Mitchell writing extensively about the 'Relational Matrix' in his theoretical book *Relational Concepts in Psychoanalysis* (1988): 'The most useful way to view psychological reality is as operating within a *relational matrix* (my italics) which encompass both intrapsychic and interpersonal realms' (p. 9). And even more astonishing to see Mitchell writing about 'Multiple Selves' in his clinical book *Hope and Dread in Psychoanalysis* (1993):

There is no hidden chamber . . . Self is woven into reciprocal interactions between the subject and others . . . The very terms and categories, in which we experience ourselves, embody a social history, a family history, a complex interpersonal history . . . People organize their experience into both *multiple and integral configurations*. (pp. 95–115, my italics)

The rhetoric of Stephen Mitchell and of S.H. Foulkes (and Norbert Elias), are like 'Siamese twins' . . . not born in the same place at the same time, but with a gap of 30 to 50 years.

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First Proof