



Working through and its various models¹

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Working through is an integral part of the psychoanalytic process, one could even say its epitome. It is therefore always present in the work of an analysis but, depending on the various phases and constraints that arise in that process, changes are brought to its form, to the issues involved in it and to its economic dimension. The author explores three forms or models of how working-through functions in relation to the dominant feature of any given analytical process. In the first of these, the issue that has to be worked over involves insight into a repressed representational complex; in the second, work has to be done on bringing into consciousness drive-related impulses or mental experiences that have until then not been able to be represented, so that the analysis itself is the first occasion on which retroactive [après-coup] processing can be initiated; and in the third, when representation and some kind of symbolization of the subjective experience and the drive-related issues that are part of it have been accomplished, the analyst then has to appropriate these subjectively and integrate them.

Keywords: drive-related impulses, interpretation, reconstruction, representation, resistance, working-through

Introduction: One way of looking at the problem

In the practice of psychoanalysis, the concept of working-through is a fundamental one although it must be acknowledged that Freud described it in detail on only two occasions: in 1914, in his famous paper *Remembering, repeating and working-through* (Freud, 1914) and in 1926, in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (Freud, 1926[1925]).

It is a fundamental concept and perhaps even one that defines the specificity of psychoanalytic practice, insofar as, much better than any other, it differentiates psychoanalysis from the kinds of psychotherapy based on suggestion; Freud himself emphasized this element. Although it appeared as long ago as 1914, at a time when the overall conception of psychoanalysis was focused on recovering forgotten memories – so that it could now almost be seen as a somewhat outdated way of looking at psychoanalytic practice – it has travelled through the years and remained a feature of the various models and conceptions of how psychoanalysis is carried out.

It was no doubt not by mere chance that a Congress of the International Psychoanalytical Association was devoted to an in-depth examination of the topic.² This was an indication that it involves a concept of the practice of

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psychoanalysis in which psychoanalysts who belong to different traditions can still acknowledge one another as such; it is therefore a fundamental concept, one which is common to the various ways in which psychoanalysis is actually practised.

On the face of it, the concept of working-through would seem to be simple enough. Nevertheless, if psychoanalysts belonging to different traditions see in what the concept attempts to define an important element of their practice as psychoanalysts, that apparent simplicity may well mask a whole series of complex levels upon which it functions. Any attempt to think about the concept must therefore try to expand on these.

In this paper, I shall focus on exploring that diversity in an attempt to describe the various modalities in which working-through can operate. These depend on the kind of psychoanalytic work required by different transference situations and different modes of mental functioning.

My main hypothesis is that, in different ways and involving issues that may also be very different, working-through is part and parcel of every psychoanalytic endeavour (which in itself may follow different models and patterns). To put it as simply and as clearly as possible, and using what in Freud's own vocabulary is accepted by all psychoanalysts, I would remind the reader that, when he introduced the concept of working-through in 1914, he linked it very closely to the idea of resistance. In 1926, he went on to describe five kinds of resistance that he organized into three main categories: ego-resistances (of which there are three types), resistance arising from the id, and resistance coming from the superego.

Following the indications described by Freud, I shall therefore explore the models of working-through as they pertain to each of these groups, viz:

- ego-resistances, of which there are three: repression resistance, transference resistance, and resistance involving the gain from illness
- resistances arising from the id (linked to the compulsion to repeat and the need to symbolize)
- resistances coming from the superego (expressed through the unconscious sense of guilt, which Freud later replaced by the need for punishment, or through ways in which subjectivity may become alienated ...).

Each of these five types of resistance demands a different kind of psychoanalytic work; each requires working-through, and here too the form that this may take and the issues involved in it will be different in each case.

Working-through in 1914: The first model, with the three kinds of ego-resistance

Before exploring the complex nature of the concept, I shall discuss the way in which Freud treated it in 1914, the way in which it was understood by psychoanalysts of that period.

At that time, Freud saw the concept of working-through in the light of his vision of psychoanalytic treatment as based on remembering repressed events from the past and on the resistance that the patient sets up against remembering. This enabled Freud to contrast psychoanalysis with other

conceptions of psychotherapy based on hypnosis and suggestion; these are carried out without any resistance being shown, and no working-through is therefore called for. It is the rejection of suggestion and hypnosis that renders working-through necessary. In both cases, the idea is to enable what was repressed to be discharged; in this context, this means uncovering the repressed material completely, bringing it into the mental sphere and thereby integrating it. The difference lies both in the means employed and in the connection between those means and the quality of the firm sense of engagement that is thereby established.

In psychoanalysis, that sense of engagement is based on an alliance with the secondary processes, which is what working-through calls upon. It is because the analysand's ego is treated with respect in psychoanalytic technique that the paths leading to repressed memories have to be worked through; hypnosis and suggestion simply short-circuit that work by making do with a conviction based on the quasi-hallucinatory force with which the initial situation returns.

Remembering is, therefore, contrasted with this modality in which past experiences are brought back in a manner that involves the compulsion to repeat (a concept, indeed, which appears for the first time in Freud's 1914 paper) and the process-related forms that this can take on: enactments and actualization in the transference of the repressed past. This, in summary, is the description of the psychoanalytic process that arises from Freud's 1914 paper.

Between the return of past events enacted in the transference and remembering *stricto sensu*, there is already one form of resistance: transference resistance. That resistance is linked to the *Agieren* itself – an enacted form of the return of a past event that does not enable it to be experienced as a memory.

It is this resistance which must first of all be worked through. The psychoanalyst suggests an interpretation (later, Freud would say a 'construction', which is a more accurate way of putting it – the idea of a hypothesis is brought out much more clearly), which behaves like a thought-in-waiting directed towards the repressed content, acting like an attractor for this.

The work can then be carried out fragment by fragment, 'piece by piece', as Freud put it, in a very gradual manner, in order to open up a path from these thoughts-in-waiting to repressed feelings and to the scenes and memories that portray them and express them. This work imposes on the psychoanalyst what Freud called "a trial of patience" (1914g, p. 155). It is at this point that the analysis comes up against the second type of resistance: repression resistance.

The slow pace of psychoanalytic work stands in contrast to any conception of the return of past experiences involving catharsis or immediate abreaction – an example of this would be the kind of instantaneous resolution that we find in Hitchcock's *Marnie*. It is based on a conception of the way in which secondary processes function, with small quantities at a time, and also on the acknowledgement of the need for processing loss. Any hope of 'identity of perception' in the actualization of the transference has to be

abandoned and let go of, as well as the transference enactments to which it gives rise.

The work of analysis then comes up against the third kind of ego-resistance that Freud mentioned: that involving the ‘gain from illness’ (in his 1926 paper, pp. 77–175, Freud writes “(secondary) gain from illness”). The patient has to give up identity of perception and agree simply to make do with identity of thinking, i.e. a representative and symbolic equivalent of the initial experience.

Nevertheless, since nobody can be killed in his or her absence or as an effigy, there is a further crucial issue at stake in this work. Since resistance also actualizes past experience, making it present and active, it plays just as important a role as its gradual lifting. As Donnet (1967) put it, there is an ‘antinomy of resistance’: it both acts as a brake on the work being done and is a necessary element of the quality of that work. Processing resistance requires a great deal of effort on the part of the mind, subjectively enhancing the analysis and giving full value to what is at stake in it. It is because resistance exists, actualizing repression in the treatment and making it tangible, that the issues involved in that repression and the repressed contents can be detected and recognized in the analysis. It is because all this requires work – and therefore time, patience and effort – that the outcome of an analysis will lead to a sense of engagement based on the subjective appropriation of the content of that analysis; the amount of energy put into it bears witness to this.

It is, however, only under certain conditions that this kind of work becomes possible. Freud described these factors as his discoveries progressed. A certain kind of mental functioning is required in both analysand and analyst:

- repression must involve memories or ideational contents that have at one time been conscious then subsequently repressed
- the work is simply that of ‘insight’ – to put it briefly, a transference neurosis has to be set up; this is an intermediate area between the historical neurosis and the psychoanalytic situation
- resistance here is above all that of the preconscious ego (the only resistance that Freud described in his 1914 paper).

The psychoanalyst’s work can therefore be seen as being able to guess, thanks to the patient’s free associations, what unconscious representations structure the sequence of associations. It then becomes possible to reconstruct the actual past experiences that are hidden behind these representations; those that are activated in and by the transference can thereupon be communicated to the analysand.

The situation and conception of the issues involved in working-through changed when Freud, as he was writing *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (Freud, 1920), began to think that unconscious resistances could stand in the way of the lifting of resistance and that the work of analysis could come up against the resistances of the unconscious superego (and its possible distortions) or those that he called in 1926 ‘resistances arising from the id’, i.e.

those that are linked to failures in the transformation of drive-related urges coming from the id.

Working-through these resistances thus took on quite another aspect and the theory behind the work of psychoanalysis became much more complex. In addition to processing the ego-resistances – what we could call the ‘classic’ kind of psychoanalytic work – other quite different forms of that work would henceforth be developed; this, of course, is an ongoing theme in contemporary psychoanalysis.

Briefly, there are three main models of the work done during an analysis, corresponding to the three main types of resistance described by Freud. All these models can be found in every analysis although they may vary in proportion, with one or other of them predominating at any one time.

The first is the one that I have just described – the difference being that henceforth it is seen as being only part of the work required of the psychoanalyst; it is not the only model, even though it does have some *in situ* relevance to neurotic states. It corresponds to the idea of ‘insight’ with respect to a repressed ideational complex. As I have pointed out, the aim of working-through in this case is to lay the groundwork for enabling the return of the repressed to make its way back through the associative plethora of those preconscious structures that are its derivatives. When there is a sufficient degree of indications that the repressed element is ready, working-through enables the reasons for and issues behind its earlier repression to be explored ‘piece by piece’. Psychoanalysts expect this kind of work to enable the repressed element to be accepted and stabilized, thanks to the effort put into how it can be expressed.

The earlier phase of repression – repression *stricto sensu* – may also be the effect of a “primal repression” (Freud, 1915, p. 148; 1926[1925], p. 94). As the work of the analysis digs deeper – and this may be a crucial element in, for example, transference situations in which the main issue has to do with narcissistic problems and the sense of identity – that primal repression will also have to be processed. This leads to the second model of the work of psychoanalysis.

The work of ‘becoming conscious’ and resistances arising from the id: A second model of working-through – by means of play

This model can be deduced from various papers that Freud wrote between 1923 and 1926. In these, he described clinical situations in which unconscious material had not been represented and subsequently repressed, since it had never at any time reached consciousness. It had not been transformed or represented symbolically in such a way as to enable it to ‘become conscious’ (Freud, 1923, 1926[1925]). In the following section, I shall explore the implications of the third model based on the work not only of symbolization (the theme of this second model) but also on subjective appropriation.

I shall for the moment focus on the kind of processing that is typical of this second model of working-through. It is based on the work of transfor-

mation that is required for material to become conscious, i.e. on processing the resistance arising from the id.

This involves past experiences which are traumatic by nature or which have had a traumatic impact. The unconscious material is immediately counter-cathected before it becomes in any way possible to represent it consciously to any significant extent. Given the intense displeasure, dread or agony to which they give rise, traumatic situations and relationships prevent the self from metabolizing the inner subjective experience that they produce. Primary defences come almost automatically into play as soon as the dread, terror or threat of annihilation contained in the traumatic situation begins to be felt, even before there is any true possibility of experiencing the situation and representing it ideationally (Freud, 1920; Winnicott, 1974). In so doing, that defence excludes from subjectivity the perceptual and sensory elements that might have enabled the subject-ego to construct a meaningful representation of what was experienced.

All the same it could be said – and, in Europe and English-speaking countries, some contemporary psychoanalysts such as Loewald (1980) tend to follow this line – that, more generally, where there is no specific traumatic context, the ‘raw material’, as Freud (1900, 1920, 1923) called it, that we find at the frontier between id and ego, where the ego can take over from the id, is by its very nature extremely complex (Loewald, 1980). That raw material mixes together various perceptions, different feelings and several drive-related impulses that may well be in conflict with one another; it merges the self’s subjective experience and drive-related involvement with the other person’s responses to those impulses.

From the outset, then, there is such an entangled and condensed mixture of elements that they cannot be integrated as such, hence the fact that they often appear to be enigmatic and confused. In order for them to be integrated, they must gradually be de-condensed and transformed thanks to a to-and-fro movement between internal and external, through a series of transfers and transpositions.

Although life in general may offer opportunities for carrying out these transfers and transpositions, it is sometimes only through psychoanalysis and the specific setting that it provides that this work can be carried out (cf. Faimberg, 2009[1998]). Material that has not been de-condensed, transposed and transformed – this is the work of metaphorization typical of symbolic representation – cannot be brought into consciousness; it cannot “become conscious” (Freud, 1926[1925], p. 159). It is therefore subject to “primal repression” (ibid., p. 94) before any true subjectivation can occur.

Primal repression then draws into itself any subsequent repression or splitting; these are the only outward manifestations of what has taken place.

Often, therefore, in the course of an analysis, over and beyond processing secondary repression as I have described with respect to Freud’s 1914 paper, there is another kind of work that consists in transforming that ‘raw material’ into something that can become conscious and able to be integrated within the ego. Freud described the factors underlying this process in 1932, in an aphorism that has become famous: ‘*Wo Es war soll Ich werden*’ [‘Where id was, there ego shall be’] (1933[1932], p. 80).

The model of working-through that is called upon here corresponds to what both analysand and analyst have to do in order for these transformations to take place. In this way, the primitive unconscious material that has never reached consciousness but which underlies secondary repression may be able to become conscious.

The first task is to facilitate the de-condensing of that raw material in the mind so that it can be represented piece by piece and detail by detail – in other words, to metabolize the resistance that is an integral part of the unconscious material (Freud, 1923) and of the drive-related urges that are contained in it and shaped by it.

For that to occur, the specific issues relating to resistances arising from the id will have to be brought into the psychoanalytic situation. Here, too, there is an antinomy of resistance with which those psychoanalysts who deal with ‘borderline psychoanalytic situations’ as I have called them (Roussillon, 1991) are familiar. These borderline situations are a threat to the psychoanalytic situation as such; they push it to the very limit and constantly threaten disruption. They become manifest through transference situations typical of negative therapeutic reactions, delusional (Little, 1981) or passionate transference patterns – and also in less obvious or less spectacular ways that correspond more to inertia, such as ‘cold’ melancholia and masochism in functioning.

When it becomes possible to do so in the transference, the fragments and components that are activated therein in an almost hallucinatory way have to be separated out, as it were. In this way, the subjective experience involved can be acknowledged as a ‘psychic representation’, enabling it to be integrated into the dimension of identity of thinking and of symbolization.

To put it briefly, the task is to enable what presents itself to the mind to be acknowledged as a ‘re-presentation’ of something belonging to the past, not as actually occurring in the present. This requires drive-related impulses and traumatic experiences to be metabolized; the initial subjective experience has to be transformed into a representation that is able to ‘become conscious’. All this requires some work of (re)construction in which the analyst plays a direct role, such that some degree of personal involvement on his or her part is inevitable. I shall come back to this crucial point later.

As Freud pointed out in 1923, the ego requires ‘representations’ if it is to do any work. It has to transform everything into mental representations and, in particular, verbal ones: perceptions, sensations, drive-related impulses, affects – in other words, all the components of the ‘raw material’ of the mind. This is the first step in the qualitative re-working of subjective experience.

It then has to explore the various mental aspects and facets of that experience in order to familiarize thinking with its primary uncanniness and thereby make its gradual integration a possibility.

This work of processing can be likened to the importance of play for children (Winnicott, 1971) because it has the same function as play at that stage in life: to bring under control difficult and potentially traumatic situations in order to symbolize them and prepare the way for their subjective appro-

priation or subjectivation. Transferring sensations, perceptions and drives and locating them in play objects – and therefore in the animism of childhood – means that they can be diffracted. This in turn enables their characteristic features to be explored so that they become easier to grasp and their various aspects can be laid out for investigation. That is why there is a need for repetition in order to explore what is at stake fragment by fragment and ‘piece by piece’ – just as when children play. Here, working-through and repetition go hand in hand. The psychoanalyst will have to differentiate this necessary and productive form of repetition, one that is part of what I have called the ‘constraints of symbolization’ (Roussillon, 1984, 1991, 1995), from those other kinds of repetition that involve the return of the traumatic situation itself.

It is important to note that this kind of processing is often carried out by both protagonists working together. The analyst is therefore much more involved in the process and is potentially in a more compromising situation than is the case in the first model of working-through that I described earlier. Analysand and analyst both take part in this work, hence the fact that some authors have emphasized the intersubjective aspects (Renik, 2004) of psychoanalytic treatment, co-thinking (Widlöcher, 1995) and co-construction (Roussillon, 1984). Ideational representation is not a ‘given’; it has to be constructed and is the product of the work of the analysis.

This joint work, in “the overlap of two areas of playing” (Winnicott, 1971, p. 38), enables the experience to be shared and libidinal elements to be revitalized. This is a necessary step if those experiences that the patient was unable to symbolize are to be bound together and integrated into the framework of the preconscious ego. I have suggested that this work should be described as being carried out ‘side-by-side’, even though the situation as a whole remains asymmetrical, insofar as each protagonist takes support from the other and the other’s work. It is in this sense that Winnicott’s aphorism ‘Psychotherapy takes place in the overlap of two areas of playing’ can be seen as particularly relevant.

The idea of working ‘side-by-side’ in constructing meaning has also to do with something that I have been highlighting for some years now: work that is accomplished in parallel or in a ‘double’ manner. Working-through takes place in a domain that is structured by two different vectors, that of the analysand and that of the analyst, which although distinct are linked together (through interplay) and require further connections to be made between them. Processing takes place between these two areas as they are brought together and linked up. The analyst relies on his or her empathy towards what is taking place without the patient being able to give proper form to it, in order to make contact with and reconstruct, through portraying them, the subjective experiences that are involved in the pattern of the transference. A kind of shared symbolization will then take place; through the work of the analysis, what the patient had been unable to symbolize in the past with his or her primary objects will then be offered a second chance of being dealt with (Faimberg, 2009[1998]).

As I have said, the analyst is part and parcel of that endeavour and will inevitably be compromised by it to some extent, in the sense that the threat

of suggestion or even of narcissistic seduction will necessarily be present. Another kind of work will therefore be required as a result of what is involved in working through the resistances arising from the id: processing, on the one hand, the inevitable seduction and suggestion that is part and parcel of analytical work, and, on the other, the transference links that may echo these elements with respect to the sexual and narcissistic seductions that the patient experienced with significant objects in the past.

In order to symbolize subjective experience, the analyst has to engage with it; that deep involvement represents a threat to subjective appropriation. It is possible to symbolize *for* the object (cf. corroborative dreams as an expression of compliance towards the analyst) – the work of symbolization carried out in such circumstances has in fact an alienating impact.

Freud saw this form of working-through, which involves not simply the work of symbolization but also that of subjective appropriation – the introjection of subjective experience – as being that of processing the resistances coming from the superego. If the shadow of the object (and of the analyst) falls on the analysis (Roussillon, 2000), the impact of that shadow will have to be dealt with, as will the tendency of the mental apparatus to assimilate the shadow of the object (Freud, 1926[1925]) – and, therefore, that of the analyst.

This leads to the third form of resistance and to the third model of working-through.

Working-through and resistances coming from the super-ego: The third model and what it involves

When, in 1923, Freud studied what was involved in negative therapeutic reactions, he emphasized that this had also to do with the person to whom the outcome of an analysis can be attributed. The work of psychoanalysis mobilizes a fundamental issue: that of the conditions under which the subjective appropriation by the analysand of that work can take place. Again, the question of seduction and suggestion in and through the analysis comes to the fore, as well as the spectre of hypnosis that was already present in Freud's 1914 paper. It was not by chance that Freud, in several of his papers written during that period (and all through his exchange of correspondence with Ferenczi) discussed the idea of unconscious thought-transmission.

In his 1923 paper, again on the subject of the negative therapeutic reaction, Freud suggested that the unconscious sense of guilt that underlies this reaction may result from a 'borrowed' identification, a hypothesis which also evokes the question of suggestion and seduction. When the work of analysis is carried out by both participants – Widlöcher's 'co-thinking', and my own 'co-construction' (Roussillon, 1984) – it becomes a matter of ensuring that no alienating suggestions are contained within it, that it is not rejected and that negativism is not exacerbated. Psychoanalysis can then be thought of as a 'field', as suggested by the Barangers (1996). This is all the more the case when we have to deal with transference situations in which narcissistic issues are very much to the fore.

It is therefore not enough merely to represent and symbolize the ‘raw material’ of the mind. What has to be elucidated is to whom that symbolization is attributed and what kinds of subjective appropriation accompany the work of symbolization. As I have briefly pointed out, Freud noted that some dreams can be corroborative; the patient dreams “in compliance with the physician’s words” (1923, p. 115). Here the analyst replaces the superego that has to be seduced or passively submitted to.

Some kinds of superego may be alienating and will therefore have to be deconstructed. They rebel against the psychoanalytic process and entail resistances to it, thereby disrupting mental functioning.

This evokes, naturally enough, the ‘harsh and cruel’ superego that Freud described in his 1923 paper; it disrupts mental functioning through treating representation as an act – that kind of confusion creates an impasse for the ego. There then arises a “pure culture of the death instinct” (Freud, 1923, p. 53). Thus the superego may demand too much of the ego and dispossess it of the benefits of its work of symbolization – or perhaps even refuse to set up the conditions under which the ego can carry out the work of symbolization. Towards the end of *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud said that it is necessary to “lower its demands” (i.e. those of the super-ego) (Freud, 1930[1929], p. 143) and fight against its more extreme requirements. What also springs to mind here, of course, are the ideals that the super-ego imposes on the ego.

Analysing and working-through the resistances coming from the superego imply going back to the way in which the ‘shadow’ of the patient’s parental objects ‘fell upon the ego’, thus contributing to the construction of the superego. The shadow of the parental objects may, as Freud pointed out, also be that of their own superego. What must also be examined in the transference relationship is how the shadow of the ideals, the theories and the specific way in which the analyst functions (Brenman, 2006) may fall upon the analysis and upon the analysand (Hanly, 2009; Mitchell, 1997). That was already a major issue for Ferenczi in his exploration of the technique of psychoanalysis and in his denunciation of what he called the professional hypocrisy of some of his colleagues. It also plays a significant part in Anzieu’s study of the principle of transitional analysis in individual psychoanalysis (Anzieu, 1989), and is a fundamental element of Winnicott’s theory and of the analysis of psychic intrusions.

In the work of co-construction required by any working-through of the resistances of the id and of archaic material, analysts cannot avoid revealing something of how they themselves function and of their own ideals. Attempting to ignore this would imply the risk of isolating a countertransference element and exacerbating the analysand’s submissiveness (or, *mutatis mutandis*, rebellion) when faced with an alienating superego/ego ideal. The analyst’s counter-attitude will inevitably be in collusion with transference issues that have to do with ‘resistances coming from the superego’, such that no working-through of their past history will be possible.

On the other hand, taking on board the inevitable suggestion/seduction effect within the analysis will open up avenues to processing the historical dimension of the superego resistances, enabling some degree of gradual

'transitionalization' of that instance to take place. A crucial element in the subjective appropriation of the analysis lies in the fact of enabling the superego also to be subjectively appropriated. It is for this reason that J.-L. Donnet, in a personal communication, suggested that Freud's aphorism should be modified so as to read '*Wo Es und Uber-Ich waren, soll Ich werden*' ['Where id and superego were, there ego shall be'].

In my own clinical experience, the work that is facilitated by the capacity for play opens up the possibility for the processes of symbolization to unfold along a found–created dimension. In addition to this, one of the pivotal elements of the work of transitionalization of the superego depends on the analysand's capacity to say 'No' to the analyst. This is a deep-rooted no that enables analysands to avoid the alienation arising from submission or rebellion; these usually indicate that the analysand is unable to say no in any authentic way – it is very much a superficial no, a no that, paradoxically, indicates compliance.

When the analysand does not have that capacity to say no, one of the forms that working-through will take is closely related to what we call negativism; this is another means by which analysands manage to preserve a sufficient degree of differentiation with respect to their analyst. The idea is to prevent the shadow of the analyst – the analyst's ideals, theories and *a priori* assumptions – falling on the analysand, and with it the risk of a re-sexualization of the latter's relationship to the superego.

In these clinical situations, working-through is superimposed on putting to the test both the analyst and his or her narcissism; these then have to 'survive' (to use Winnicott's term) in order to make possible the work of differentiating me from not-me. That work is one of the crucial issues to be dealt with in the analysis and in the processing that the analytical situation encourages. If no 'uncoupling' takes place between analysand and analyst, the coupling/uncoupling interplay between ego and superego – their entanglement/differentiation – cannot be worked through freely enough, so that it remains caught up in the constraints of the infantile dimension.

If that uncoupling cannot be carried out, all the analyst does is substitute for the past influence of the analysand's significant objects the present influence of his or her own ideals, value systems and *a prioris*. Thereupon the analysis becomes a kind of machine for influencing or for suggesting, whatever the analyst's good intentions or professional ethics. Some degree of influence and suggestion coming from the analyst is anyway inevitable, because these elements do not depend exclusively on the analyst or on the precautions that he or she takes in order not to have an impact on the patient; they also depend on the form of the transference and on the function that this attributes to the analyst. Being sensitive to the effects of this tendency and of how it is expressed is part of what is involved in working-through the 'resistances coming from the superego'; it then becomes possible to analyse those influences.

The sensitivity and attentiveness that are given to these issues enable what Winnicott called the 'use of the object' to be analysed – by which he meant the analysand's capacity to use the analyst and working-through in order to analyse the characteristic features of his or her own narcissism.

Conclusion

In the three ‘models’ that I have described and the three transference situations that are part of them, working-through is always present although its nature changes as the issues involved in it change through the interplay of the psychoanalytic encounter. Working-through is a fundamental feature of the psychoanalytic process; it is *the* element that gives enough time for the workings of the mind to be properly acknowledged, brought under control, explored and appropriated. Above all, it is *the* element that provides the proper conditions for the work of psychoanalysis not to be limited to the preconscious [*Pcs*] system but to come into contact with the real unconscious issues that the various kinds of resistance both hide and reveal; in this way, true processing can lead to an authentic kind of engagement.

That is why working-through is the crucial concept of psychoanalytic technique, the concept that gives it its very foundation. It is thanks to the idea of working-through that psychoanalysis can avoid being simply another technique based on suggestion, no matter how sophisticated. This is a crucial issue for contemporary psychoanalysis.

Translations of summary

Die Durcharbeitung und ihre Modelle. Durcharbeiten ist ein integraler Bestandteil des psychoanalytischen Prozesses, man könnte beinahe sagen, es sei dessen Inbegriff. Deshalb ist das Durcharbeiten in der Arbeit der Analyse ständig präsent, aber abhängig von den verschiedenen Stadien und Hemmnissen, die in diesem Prozess auftreten, ändern sich deren Form und Inhalt sowie das Ausmaß der dazu nötigen psychischen Energie. Der Autor untersucht drei Formen oder Modelle, wie das Durcharbeiten in Bezug auf das jeweils vorherrschende Merkmal eines gegebenen analytischen Prozesses funktioniert. Im ersten Modell geht es bei dem, was durchgearbeitet werden muss, um Einsichten in einen verdrängten repräsentationalen Komplex, beim zweiten konzentriert sich die Arbeit auf die Bewusstmachung von triebbezogenen Impulsen oder psychischen Erfahrungen, die bis dahin noch nicht repräsentiert werden konnten, so dass die Analyse als solche die erste Gelegenheit zur Initiierung einer nachträglichen [*après-coup*] Verarbeitung bietet, und im dritten Modell muss der Analysand dann, wenn eine Repräsentation und eine gewisse Symbolisierung des subjektiven Erlebens und der dazugehörigen triebbezogenen Aspekte erreicht worden sind, das Durchgearbeitete subjektiv einordnen und integrieren.

La elaboración y sus modelos. La elaboración es parte integral del proceso psicoanalítico; podría decirse incluso que es su epítome. Por ello está siempre presente en el trabajo de un análisis. Pero su forma, los temas involucrados y su dimensión económica dependen de las diversas fases y limitaciones que surgen en aquel proceso. El autor explora tres formas o modelos de funcionamiento de la elaboración en relación al rasgo dominante de un proceso analítico. En el primer modelo, el tema a ser elaborado comprende el *insight* respecto a un complejo representacional reprimido; en el segundo, el trabajo consiste en hacer consciente las pulsiones o experiencias mentales relacionadas con la pulsión que hasta aquel momento no han sido posibles de ser representadas, de manera que el psicoanálisis es la primera ocasión en la cual puede iniciarse un proceso retroactivo [*après coup*]; y en el tercer modelo, cuando se ha alcanzado la representación y algún tipo de simbolización de la experiencia subjetiva y de las cuestiones relacionadas con la pulsión que son parte de ella, el análisis tiene entonces que apropiarse subjetivamente de éstos, e integrarlos.

La perlaboration et ses modèles. La perlaboration est inhérente au travail psychanalytique, elle en est la forme même, elle est donc toujours présente dans celui-ci, mais elle change de forme, d'enjeux et d'économie selon les moments et les exigences de celui-ci. J'explorerais trois formes, trois modèles, de son fonctionnement en fonction de ce qui est au premier plan du travail psychanalytique. Une première forme lorsque l'enjeu du travail est celui d'aider à la prise de conscience d'un complexe représentationnel refoulé, une seconde forme lorsque le travail psychique concerne le « devenir conscient » de motions pulsionnelles ou d'expériences psychiques qui n'ont pu être antérieurement représentées et dont le temps de l'analyse est le premier temps d'après-coup, enfin une troisième forme lorsque la représentation et une certaine forme de symbolisation de l'expérience subjective et de ses enjeux pulsionnels étant effectuée il s'agit pour l'analysant de se l'approprier subjectivement et de l'intégrer.

La perlaborazione e i suoi modelli. La perlaborazione è un elemento integrante del processo psicanalitico, anzi si potrebbe addirittura definirla come il suo compendio. Pertanto, è sempre presente nel lavoro di analisi ma, a seconda delle fasi e degli ostacoli diversi che sorgono in quel processo, può cambiare nella forma, nei contenuti e nella sua dimensione economica. L'autore esplora tre forme o modelli di funzionamento della perlaborazione in relazione al tratto dominante di ogni dato processo analitico. Nel primo di questi, il problema da affrontare richiede un'*insight* all'interno di un complesso rappresentazionale represso; nel secondo, è necessario lavorare sul portare alla luce stimoli legati alla pulsione o a esperienze mentali che, fino a quel momento, non si è stati in grado di rappresentare, di modo che l'analisi stessa sia la prima occasione per dare inizio a un'elaborazione retroattiva [*après-coup*]; e nel terzo, allorché sono stati portati a termine una rappresentazione e un certo tipo di simbolizzazione dell'esperienza soggettiva, insieme ai problemi legati alla pulsione che ne fanno parte, il paziente deve appropriarsene in modo soggettivo e integrarli.

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