

## Comments on the Javier García's paper

Asbed Aryan

Before starting with my comments about this substantial paper by Javier García dedicated to the theory of the psychoanalytic practice with adolescents, I would like to communicate the reader that I will try to do it in such a way so that "it looks like having a dialogue" with the author. This "playing" way has inspired me on his paper.

From the beginning of his "Introduction", J. García wants to transmit us that in psychoanalysis he privileges the clinical experience and he holds up that the theoretical knowledge is "necessary but insufficient and eccentric to the experience". He also reminds us that it is "an unconscious experience, singular and crafty". I agree that it is never redundant to emphasize and clarify what "the psychoanalytic thing" consists of, as we see a diversity of practices which due to the pressure and demand of the social-cultural reality for fast and efficient solutions, are continuously arising, have their apogee and fall in disuse. It is not the "technique" which defines "the psychoanalytic thing", but in any case the opposite. That it is not necessary to make it clear that a practice is considered psychoanalytic, if it is based on "the unconscious experience, singular and crafty" although it may look like "psychotherapy"

I repeat, I agree with all this and especially with the idea that it is important to remember it whenever we have the opportunity.

But I also believe that this concern could make us forget the fact that the psychoanalytic method, with its request of principles "to associate freely", was created to approach neurotic adult patients, with quite established psychic structures displaying syntactic distortions in their speech, expressed by different unconscious formations (symptoms, acts, lapses, dreams) what Freud called "the return of the repressed". So it is also advisable to remember that the "unconscious experience" is shaped through the Preconscious/Conscious, making it possible to metabolize an external and/or internal (drive) stimulus and to transform it into unconscious experiences **if and only if** the total experience shared between analyzand and analyst has been adequate. If however, the analyzand is very occupied in the way and what type of effect he causes on his interlocutor with his speech or otherwise, he does not perceive his relation with his own speech, he will

not practice the free association at all and there will be no free and fluent communication between the conscious and unconscious processes. This forces us to create certain meta psychological reframing so we can understand diverse psychic states, which implies much more than "making certain rulings in order to orient our practice" as J.G. grants. Here it is possible to think about adolescents, not with a descriptive age criterion, but considering "the age" psychoanalytically, as an unstable structure where the thinking consecrated to the use of the secondary processes, continues being open to primary processes and needing the facilitation of the "language of action" for their own expression until the creation of the figuration and the channel of expression in accord to the secondary process and the code shared with the interlocutor finally take place.

Javier García prevents us from considering the adolescence as a category according to evolutionary psychology and for that reason I agree with him on that the psychoanalytic approach will be possible if we consider the adolescence as an open and standing mental structure, independent from the age.

It is very important to emphasize, as he does, the two most common dangers that we find in daily clinical work. Those which can easily and frequently push us "to lose analytical effectiveness and slipping into psycho therapies with pedagogical spirit", because they interfere in the contact with the emotional experience, interference adolescents tolerate very little and which makes them feel they are not listened to but instructed. These eventualities can have consequences like inhibition or narcissistic collision scaling as well.

The author adds: "if these risks are present at any analysis, it is also certain that the adolescents in general cause them more and pardon us less".

Such explicitations require the analyst to have more specific aptitude and training and to have the "availability for different types of expressive communications" similar to the patient's, to be able to have an attitude of larger "possibility and flexibility that could include different ways of making story" as it is well described by JG, besides having the permanent humbleness for showing himself not knowing enough and being ready to be surprised, almost with adventuring pleasure. What is definitely certain is that these "scenes" do not mean "another psychoanalysis", but they are only to remember that "the ideal" psychoanalyst who has all the communicating availabilities does not exist and it can be inhibiting, if the suggestion is that a more specific training is not necessary. That is to say, for any analyst it is inhibiting even confusing that he should be able to hold the analysis of any youngster just if he has clarity and the conviction that the analysis is an "unconscious experience, singular and crafty".

For the same reason I share the idea that it is within the story of each clinical experience with adolescents where the “specific thing” arises because the generalizations have an inevitable nucleus of instability and the theories are insufficient and eccentric to the emotional and unconscious experience.

### **Scenes of the playful: staging and occurrences**

Javier García says: “The entrance to adolescence is singular and according to its context. Nevertheless we know that in our daily work we find much of the analysis with children. It is very interesting when we are working with a child entering into his early adolescence, as we can see in the following example”.

This situation is indeed singular and unique comparing with other vital circumstances because the adolescence is the last stage of subject -making regarding the definition of the sexual position that will have to occur within the symbolism. JG shares with the reader that “... it is very interesting when we are working with a child who is entering into his early adolescence...”, because not only the infantile repressed will be repeated but there will also take place a psychic work in order to transform the incestuous object relation into a non-incestuous one that occurs in those circumstances and not in others. The sexual debut is shown in the horizon as a possibility, an original adolescent event that forces to pertinent meta psychological considerations.

Regarding the clinical material, I think that JG’s interest in considering the expressive forms of the different types of speeches that take place due to the interaction with the adolescent (more than with the child) forces us with the same development of all the communication availabilities, and forces us in the way of a counter transference experience to overcome the “prejudice of adults” that considers the communication of conscious ideas with speaking expressions as the only symbolic way, but that are also equally symbolic gesture-corporal speeches and expressive intonations. And it is valid for the expressivity of the analyst who will have the opportunity to remember his adolescence in act (“surprising occurrences”). The subject of the styles in David Liberman’s work has similar ideas.

I want to emphasize my total agreement with JG on the subject of the “occurrences” especially about the unconscious ones and for the same reason he insists on everything that surprises him. “The small acts, of word or intonation, gesture or writing” during the analysis experience are indicating “the unconscious dimension that moves within us or moves us”.

I wish to emphasize JG's acuteness to detect in his counter transference the comparison interrogating between the body and the word as well as between his books and the woman sexuality. In order to be able to continue connecting with the subject of the suspension of answers which, if tolerated, will move to the creativity "in between", term that totally condenses the climate of the analytical unconscious experience the analyst shares with the analyzand

I think that "not to fill the interpretative senses" is a very precise and necessary indicator of the transaction of de-identifications.

### **The intervention in act**

I think that when Javier García remembers that: "The act understood as *doing with words, gestures and conducts* is something the analyst at first suspends so he can facilitate the transference interpretation", it is because habitually an excess is recommended when there has previously been an excess in the opposite sense.

The sequence of the bicycle is very significant in this sense. Here JG introduces the concept of prohibition/symbolic castration referring to the insufficiency and the idea of limits in relation to his possibility of interpreting and to the analytical work in session. We must notice that speaking with the patient in the heat of insufficiency dimension, JG said to the patient "it is *not possible*... (to go back home by bicycle etc.)" When we are operating in the possibility/impossibility dimension, registry of the omnipotence, more than the allowed/prohibited dimension, registry of triangularity and Oedipus Complex, the intervention in act or even better, *words in act* (a sentence, a conclusive definition, an order, a warning) proves always necessary since the talking in reflexive terms is not sufficient nor efficient because it is conjectural. But the reason of this failure is not a gap in the method or a mistake on the side of the analyst, but it is necessary to take into account that we are operating in another registry, the narcissistic one, therefore the conjectural is inefficient and will easily be neglected or misunderstood by the patient.

JG says: "The effectiveness in taking part in transference so that something more symbolic of the castration "reaches to the bones", I think that it fundamentally goes through the experience of this 'limit' or painful insufficiency of the analyst". I think that the reason he refers to this dimension (the narcissistic) is also that JG needs to resort to the expression "reaches to the bones" which makes reference to the contact (unconscious) psycho-soma, word-body, symbolic-real. Perhaps it would not be a "limit experience or of painful insufficiency in the analyst" if this dimension of the communication were taken care of.

Probably the pejorative connotation of the concept of "acting-out" always threatens in prevailing because it evokes that inverse sense JG refers to.

### **Games of mirror-like illusions**

First I want to state that this is the most original section, not as a subject but as the development of the subject (without saying it) of the analyst place in analysis with adolescents. It is unfolded, almost very clearly "staged", why JG insists on that the genuine psychoanalytic experience is "unconscious, singular and crafty". He adds that the responsibility of the words and ideas used in session is not very clearly separable within the patient-analyst couple, but that it comes from places of enunciation of speeches that exceed us clearly and they are constituted strongly like a dual experience".

Referring to the mirror experiences and imitations, JG emphasizes that they appear as much in shape of staging (in acts) as well as in the thinking and the speech of elder adolescents (middle-teenagers for example). He emphasizes they are experiences which "...are somehow always present and they challenge us to go through them during the experience itself" and he mentions several different experiences with middle-teenage analizands

(! ;! ;! It is quite surprising that in such a specific section to the subject of this paper, JG resorts so simply to the mentioning of the age subject).

As I emphasized in the beginning of this section, the concepts of responsibility and strongly dual experiences JG reminds us of, are also Anna Freud's "philosophical preoccupations", but he does not ratify with her example the difficulty of analyzability, and instead he shows us an aspect of the process of incorporation of experiences and characteristics in analysis with adolescents.

JG describes very clearly which place the analyst must occupy so that he can contribute to the transformation of narcissistic aspects. This will be possible if elements that allow the recreation of a symbolic structure are incorporated from another (third) place. It is very stimulating and meaningful the description that JG makes of the experiences of mirror functioning shared with the adolescent where the youngster can look at himself from another place, detached from the Ego that watches and sees himself in the other. Intense moments where the Ego of the patient lays in the analyst and needs to be supported by him in his state of Ego-non Ego confusion" "Situations or games of doubles or mirror -like mutual reflections where a total conveyance to a self image that creates somebody who is loved and is required to be loved seems to be necessary... In order to make a recovering of

the subjective anchorage possible, something as acknowledgement and something good must be incorporated through the analyst. The body and mirror experience will make possible the identification to the words and style of the analyst. I want to emphasize my total agreement with JG when he says "It is a challenge for us if these happens only like a repetition of what always fails in its constitution or if that repetition is allowing a recreation of symbolic structure" like something new that arises in the transference experience constituting new subjective anchorages that make new transferences possible. This is what Liberman considered as the prospective aspect of transference.

### **In the limits of the interpretation or the interpretation of the limits**

The adolescents insist on facing any blindness and striking there where the Law and the norms can undoubtedly have fissures and weaknesses, because it is their way to invert the pain of losing their omniscience and the control of the knowledge.

As I conclude, I would like to asseverate that an excellent analyst who has always been in touch only with adult patients, would have never been able to shape this excellent paper with so pertinent clinical materials about our daily practice subjects with teenagers.

If JG wants to state that this circumstance in any way does not mean that we are dealing with "another psychoanalysis " I agree with him absolutely. I also agree with the idea of not demarcating a psychoanalytic "technique" to define stipulated steps and guidelines, as a surgical technique. And this I do sustain for any age. Even more, I think that we should seriously think about its substitution using terms like "practice" or "clinic", which keep the analyst's spirit of creativity towards a singular analyzand.

But reconsidering the idea that a psychoanalytic specificity for the adolescence is not necessary, I think we should keep in mind that there are certain events of universal character (Laplanche) which demand and deserve psychoanalytic answers, as for example, the debuting practice of the sexual life as well as the procreative capacity that make their first appearance during the adolescence and create brand new conditions in transference and counter transference situations.

Thank you very much to Javier García.

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