

## IN SEARCH OF A LOST HOLDING

Albert Namer<sup>°</sup>

**Summary:**

In this paper, based on clinical experience, the author proposes some innovative ideas concerning the way in which primitive projections and the ensuing defences evoked in both patient and analyst are handled. Projections which are the product of regression often trigger the initial request for psychoanalytic help. These projections, which can vary in quality and in quantity, may, at certain times in the treatment, become more intense. Proper understanding and intervention procedures are required in order to facilitate the shift from a context based essentially on projective identification to one in which the analytical transference can be established, processed and interpreted, thereby making for development in the psychoanalytic process. Although in such circumstances the containing function may give rise to specific difficulties, it remains an indispensable element of the work of the analysis.

Some clinical illustrations of patients presenting quite severe symptoms, including states of confusion, are added as examples of how, through the experience of continuity that psychoanalysis offers, patients can develop their own capacity for containing the interpretations suggested by the analyst.

**Keywords:**

Containing function - defences - early anxiety - institutional and group processing - projections - projective identification - psychoanalytic technique - psychotic anxiety - regression - representations of the container

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<sup>°</sup> Psychanalyste (Société Psychanalytique de Paris).