

Psychodynamic Incidents in
Teaching and Learning

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Learning**

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I, Ambrose Dominic Hogan, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues for greater recognition of the rôle that psychodynamic and relational material plays in teaching, schools and classrooms, and introduces the idea of ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching and learning’. Emerging out of years of classroom practice in secondary schools and in higher education, the research explores the boundary between teaching and psychotherapeutic clinical processes: to achieve this, the author draws on biographical material, his teaching experiences and experiential learning in psychoanalytic contexts, including the pre-clinical elements of a Jungian training in psychodynamic psychotherapy. The thesis makes use of co-authorship and autoethnography to provide a methodological framework within which a range of data (including autobiographical reflections on psychodynamic material and one piece of co-authored narrative) can be brought together as part of a coherent argument. The thesis presents data showing how clinical psychodynamic phenomena (resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, the therapeutic alliance, fantasy, and the impact of the unconscious itself) function as profound and significant forces in teaching which – though often denied or disavowed by practitioners – need to be recognised.

IMPACT STATEMENT

This study makes use of methods of inquiry that link teaching practice with the experiential learning that is created through psychoanalytic clinical processes. The expertise, knowledge, analysis, and insight presented in this thesis might thus prove useful within education studies and qualitative research methodology in general, and autoethnography in particular; it is also a contribution to the emerging field of psycho-social studies.

The thesis argues that there are such things as ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching and learning’, and the hope is that other teachers will find the methods and insights offered here useful. These insights include the suggestion that the disciplined use of psychoanalytic ideas and practices can help teachers understand what happens in their classrooms: this knowledge could make a profound difference to the lives of teachers, who are often subject to unconscious forces that for some, at times, become nearly unbearable. Indeed, the wider range of more chronic psychodynamic factors – including attachment anxiety – may be a factor in teacher burnout and other pressures to leave the profession. The ideas that precipitate out of this work, including suggestions about approaches to ‘containment’ structures to support teachers in their work, could thus have significant impact on teacher retention.

My colleague, Andrew Murray, commenting about teacher CPD, noted that “work on instilling a ‘growth mind-set’ in students, [contained] no discussion of the nature of the mind or its purpose” (Murray, 2016: 295). My hope is that the professional learning from which this project emerges might frame a different approach to the ‘mind’, and to teachers’ conceptions of psychology and the unconscious. It has certainly changed how I approach my work in teacher education.

Furthermore, the project devised two usable methods through which it is possible for teachers to explore the workings of psychodynamic processes in their classroom practice: psychoanalytically-informed co-authorship and psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography. Both of these methods afford the possibility of creating readable narratives which could help teachers recognise 'psychodynamic incidents' in their teaching, and open-up to wider participation in the teaching profession both reading and writing about psychoanalytic ideas in mainstream schooling.

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PART I

POSITIONING THE THESIS

Chapter 1

Introduction

This project arose out of eight years of secondary teaching (which itself came after a period of intensive Jungian analysis as a patient), followed by some four years teaching young people in settings outside schools, and twelve years teaching education in a university. My time as a teacher in the school classroom was an experience of happiness, sadness, success, frustration and complexity. As Bibby (2010) makes clear, teaching exposes one to forces that are experienced as significantly more complex than is often allowed for by the dominant theories of education; those theories seem rather to seek to tidy, simplify, categorise, control and to measure, rather than to feel. In my own teaching, what kept surfacing for me was the sense that the dialogic qualities of classroom interactions mirrored the dynamic and relational alchemy that was experienced in the psychoanalytic consulting room, in interpersonal processes that can be described as ‘psychodynamic’¹: children and young people sought meaningful connections with their teachers; in turn, they became part of their teachers’ imaginative worlds, were discussed with colleagues, thought about outside of school. Not infrequently, in learning situations the unspoken, the unthought, the unthinkable seemed in force.

¹ A term which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

Why was I so interested in this material? Where did I develop an interest in these ideas? What gave me the confidence as a classroom teacher even to think about this parallel between clinical, therapeutic psychodynamic processes and what happens in classrooms? One answer to this is that my decision to become a teacher was intimately interwoven with psychological questions, moments of growth, therapy and some very complex emotions and experiences.

I experienced an occurrence of ‘moderate to severe’ depression in my mid-twenties, which was treated with once-a-week psychotherapy for some three years (1995-1998), followed by three years of three-times-a-week Jungian analysis (between 1998 and 2001). Not unusually, the issues that arose in that therapy were connected to childhood experiences and to my own relationship to anger and to sex. Over those years in the therapists’ chairs or on their couches, the conventional psychoanalytic terrain of early relational experiences, of adolescence and of relationships with parents and others was opened-up and explored: the beginnings of that lengthy journey that is the process of unpacking repression.

One of the therapists I worked with in the 1990s lent me a copy of the popular psychology book *Families, and How to Survive Them*, co-authored by the psychoanalytically-trained psychiatrist, Robin Skynner, and the comic actor, John Cleese (Skynner and Cleese, 1997 (1983)). Whilst I recognise this cannot be considered to be a key text in psychology, it was for me a profoundly helpful piece of writing, which – along with the therapy – transformed my relationship with my biography, introduced to me key psychoanalytic concepts, and gave me a new way of thinking about anger, depression and libido.

One of themes that was most resonant for me in the Skinner and Cleese book, was how a certain bounded arousal is both natural and necessary within parent and child relationships: as Cleese phrases it, the parent should allow themselves to “enjoy the buzz” (p. 276), or the consequences can be very negative and inhibiting for the child. This is because (as Skinner goes on to explain) as the child develops the full range of human emotions, one of the roles of the adults in their life is to be used by the child “for target practice” (p. 277), as something to be experimented on as the child comes to terms with the experienced reality of their emotional power, be that anger, hate, or sexuality. Skinner argues that for such development to proceed in a healthy manner, it is essential that the adult not be scared of these forces, but to “relax and enjoy it” (p. 277), cautioning adults not to “alter your natural response to protect yourself, but keep still, or rather keep your own course”.

This was a revelation to me. Insights such as these, interwoven with the therapy that accompanied them, completely re-engineered my ideas of what a normal adolescence should be like. They helped me think differently about the function of adults in the imaginative world of children, about what parenting a young person needs, and about what children and young people expect from the adults who are in charge of them.

These thoughts, and the emotional growth experienced in therapy, helped me better to mentalise the emotional and developmental needs of the adolescent: starting with the adolescent that I had been ten years previously, I was by extension able to think about the idea of ‘the teenager’ differently, and this made the whole thought of a career working with young people much less scary. So – although these were not consciously connected at the time – it is probably not a coincidence that around the time of completing that first round of psychotherapy in 1998, I had made the decision to begin initial teacher education (applying in 1999, to start in 2000). In that sense – for me, at least

– my professional conception of the rôle of the teacher has always had a psychodynamic aspect; that is to say, the idea of the teacher in my psyche was, from the moment I decided to become one, interwoven with an unconscious assumption of its psychodynamic aspects, and shadowed by the emotional memory of my own unmet needs as a child.

Many teachers are familiar with the experience of being the subject of projections from pupils, though may not name them as such: these range from the childish affection of primary children that so obviously parallels filial love, to the commonplace crushes and experimentation that adolescents often go through. Because of my personal sensitivity to the intersubjective movements between adults and the young people in their care, rooted in the subjective and highly personal story outlined above (and because of the habits of practice-based research formed in initial teacher education and CPD), some three or four years into teaching, I began to be conscious of the sense in which things that happened in my classroom, in my work in school, felt for me very similar to the processes I had experienced in the therapist's chair.

Initial teacher education programmes often warn beginner teachers not to take it personally when children rage against your authority – the anger isn't about you, it's about everything that your rôle or persona represents. That basic guidance about behaviour management was something I learnt in my PGCE; however, I also realised that when other emotions are projected onto a teacher – the less acceptable, more taboo emotions, such as hate or desire – these also might emanate from normal developmental processes. Just as the correct way to cope with a young person's anger is to withstand it, acknowledge it without becoming part of its rage (and thus be able to reflect something back that creates understanding), might the teacher's rôle when confronted with hate or love be exactly the same? – to withstand it, acknowledge without becoming part of it, and reflect something back that

creates understanding. These processes – in which the teacher is consciously part of a dynamic of change in the emotional, psychic world of the pupil – potentially offer one working definition of what the psychodynamic might look like in an educational context, an idea which is explored in more detail throughout this thesis.

When these ideas began first to emerge consciously for me, around 2005, I have a clear recollection of sharing them with the school counsellor of the comprehensive I was teaching in: it took place in the kitchen of the staff room, and her enthusiasm was striking and memorable – “do it!” she said – write that doctorate, explore these ideas! My memory also was that her enthusiasm was motivated at least in part by a sense that this aspect of what teaching *is* was under-acknowledged, often simply disavowed.

However, this was, clearly, problematic, risky territory.

Given the negative quality to my motivation that I acknowledge above (rooted in my own darker childhood experiences), and my realisation that my ‘calling’ to be a teacher was shadowed by my own emotional needs (either the memory of them, or the left-over, un-met emotional needs that persisted for me in my late twenties) would it ever be possible for my investigation into the ‘psychodynamic’ element of teaching practice to be legitimate? Or rather, was my interest in intellectualising and seeking to generalise what might actually be only be a subjective, pathological experience be nothing more than a defensive manoeuvre to protect thoughts and feelings that should rather be better bounded, and kept out of teaching? These issues could be framed in more explicitly methodological terms with the simple question of whether there were any prospect that my highly personal insight could ever be helpful to other teachers. On the other hand, maybe I wasn’t alone (even in my more

problematic motivation), and it might be that other teachers had similar, shadowy back-stories that it would be good to bring to consciousness.

That, however, presented another, ethical issue. One of the central questions that then emerged from the sketchy hypothesis I wanted to explore was how might other teachers deal in their own psychology with being loved, hated – or desired – by their pupils; I was most certainly prepared to consider how *I* coped with being the object of fantasy, but – even with the aim of asserting a more generalisable phenomenon in a wider population than just myself – was it ever going to be legitimate to ask other adults to explore these very intimate and risky questions? Because these themes opened-up the possibility of fantasy (and of the teacher's response to a young person's fantasies) could these issues be investigated with other participants without running the risk of those teachers revealing things they would be unwilling to have recorded?

Furthermore, given the nature of clinical processes in psychotherapy, which are explicitly about bringing to consciousness repressed material (such as the aetiology that underlay my own vocation as a teacher), was there not a risk that a psychoanalytically-informed exploration of the psychodynamic aspects of teaching and learning risked exposing teachers to knowledge they were not ready to learn? And in addition to these ethical concerns, there were methodological challenges inherent in any research into interior psychology, including the dubious project of attempting to 'prove' the applicability to others of any subjective psychological experience.

These concerns crystallised around a number of questions that emerged for me out of my experiences in the classroom – questions which this project set out to explore:

Were my experiences of classroom relationships actual, or just fantasy?
– were the phenomena I thought I detected in my classroom or in my

relationships with the pupils I taught in any way truly ‘psychodynamic’ (in that there was something that happened between me and someone else) or did they emerge entirely from my own psychological material (having, in fact, very little to do with the pupils’ experience of reality)?

If there actually were psychodynamic incidents in my teaching, how could these be written about – what sort of data could be constructed that might support the existence of these phenomena?

Teaching not being clinical psychotherapy, but psychotherapy maybe having something that could help us understand teaching, how could this boundary (between the clinical and the paedagogical) be safely investigated in an ethical and responsible manner?

Was this material simply my ‘baggage’ or would there be anything from it that might be useful to other teachers, or transferable to other contexts?

Was I an outlier, a single case, a data set of 1?

The first of those questions (‘were my experiences of classroom relationships actual, or just fantasy?’) will require a little glossing here before proceeding, because in framing it there is a certain amount of philosophy and psychological theory being applied (all of which is used throughout the thesis, and explored in more detail in the methodology section, Chapter 4, beginning on p. 135).

The question of fantasy (and the term ‘phantasy’, from object relations) is controversial in both psychology and research, primarily because, like the experience of colour, it is an exemplification of the subjective. A thought experiment fleshes-out what I’m getting at here: let us pretend that I tell you that there are such things as pink elephants; you can argue with me about whether pink elephants exist in the actual world, but you cannot question that

I can imagine one (that they exist in my mind). This introduces a distinction between the imagined world and the actual world, and indeed whether we can be certain about the existence of actual phenomena, or that they might not just be imagined. In using the term ‘actual’ to describe something that in common usage might just be described as ‘real’, I am applying categories derived from Critical Realist depth ontology, which in keeping with wider philosophical practice uses the term ‘real’ to indicate a domain that lies behind and underpins human experience, and uses the term ‘actual’ to point to provable, experienced, knowable phenomena. Again, these ideas are fleshed-out in more detail in the methodology chapter.

The first of my set of research questions listed above, then, is about whether my experiences of psychodynamic phenomena in teaching were or were not pink elephants: where those hypothetical ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching’ entirely subjective experiences experienced only by me in my head (in which case, they still have some significance because my experience of them will have been psychologically authentic, and will have had impacts on how I was as a teacher); or, was there some validity in my sense that there was something inter-subjective about those moments (that is to say, shared in some way phenomenologically between me and the pupil or pupils in the same putative incident).

This thesis presents my answers to these questions.

Overview or ‘Map’ of the Thesis

The thesis is framed by this introductory chapter and **Chapters 2 and 3**. **Chapter 2** is titled ‘Terms, Concepts and the Importance of a Psychodynamic

Approach’, and **Chapter 3** ‘A Critical Account of Teaching’s Relationship with Psychoanalysis’. These chapters provide a literature review which presents the key concepts and terms used and a critical review of relevant work in the fields of psychoanalysis, Jungian psychology and psychodynamics; this aims at locating the study, positioning the thesis and establishing the theoretical foundations informing the research.

Throughout this project, I have attempted as far as possible to avoid an overly sectarian approach to psychoanalysis (in what is at times a fractured and vigorously contested field), and acknowledge that there might be things to learn from people whose theoretical position one might not immediately agree with. However, anyone interested in this territory comes with particular theoretical biases, and my chosen approach to the unconscious is a Jungian one (a psychology also known as ‘analytical psychology’, in order to distinguish it from Freudian ‘psycho-analysis’). Chapter 2 thus also explores what this theoretical positioning might mean, and provides an explanation of the key Jungian concepts that inform the thesis. It looks at the difference between the psychoanalytic and the psychodynamic; it also explores some of those theoretical debates between psychoanalytic schools, and examines how Kleinian Object Relations theory (which is used in some of the later analysis) sits alongside a Jungian theoretical framework, and explores the tensions between these theories, providing a rationale for including both approaches. It clarifies differences between Jungian and post-Jungian approaches to the unconscious, and provides an outline of Jungian approaches to transference and how these might be distinguished from Freudian approaches.

Chapter 3 progresses the general summary of the key issues in psychoanalysis and related psychologies (presented in Chapter 2) to look at how these ideas have impacted on education studies, and explores whether education is or can be a ‘psychoanalytic’ endeavour.

Chapter 4 explores the broad methodological and ethical issues presented by an inherently complex area of research. Chapter 4 also includes a summary of relevant debates in the field of the relatively new discipline of psycho-social studies, and positions this thesis in that field (addressing, *inter alia*, whether or not ‘psycho-social’ should be spelt with or without the hyphen); that section includes a discussion about the boundaries in research between the psychoanalytic and the research interview (acknowledging the debate conducted by Stephen Frosh with Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson). The methodological complexities of this area (and the particular interests of my research) led initially to the adoption of a co-authorship approach, and this phase of the research is covered in Part II: Part II consists of two chapters, **Chapter 5** outlining the methods adopted, with **Chapter 6** containing the co-authored narrative and the analysis of it that was created with a participating teacher.

An opportunity arose to make use of autoethnography (primarily because of autoethnography’s focus on the author as the source of data, and the awareness that by that point in this project, 2017, there was no shortage of data). Part III (**Chapters 7, 8 and 9**) therefore contains autoethnographic material. A justification for the use of autoethnography (and a framing of this work within that discourse) is presented in Chapter 7, with Chapters 8 and 9 presenting some contrasting autoethnographic material. In Chapter 8, I use the receipt of four emails from or about past pupils as the starting points for a series of psychoanalytically-informed reflections on my relationships with my pupils; through these I hope to offer my perspective on what the psychodynamic or relational might mean to a classroom teacher. In Chapter 9, I write about my own psychology: I describe some acute psychological incidents and analyse these, drawing on the experiential and theoretical learning that has emerged through this project, so as to deepen the readers’

understanding of how my own subjectivity was at play in my identity as a teacher and a researcher.

The final part (Part IV) turns to the ‘public interest’ questions about this research, and the questions of its wider utility or impact: in those concluding sections in **Chapter 10**, I return to the question of the usefulness or the relevance of this project to teachers and teaching, suggest next steps in the research, and look at how psychodynamic and relational issues are currently playing in British schools and education policy.

The structure of the thesis, therefore, could be read as having the following foci:

Part I focuses on framing the project, locating it within current knowledge and in qualitative research methodology.

Part II, through creating data with another teacher, begins to explore the questions posed above about generalisability – whether there might be any justification in my sense that psychodynamic thinking could help other teachers think about their lives in school, and whether psychodynamic forces are active in other teachers’ lives (rather than just my own). Through the use of the co-authored material, it also explores one possible method that could be developed to explore psychodynamic aspects of teaching and learning. The focus of that part, one could say, is on the experience of other teachers.

In contrast, **Part III**, through the use of psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography, provides extensive data about and analysis of my subjective experience of ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching’, and explores in more detail how my own psychology was at play in my life as a teacher. Its focus, complementing the focus of the preceding part, is

on my subjective experience, and offers my attempts to answer the questions posed above about how my psychology – including its potentially problematic elements – was at play in my teaching practice.

Part IV discusses the material in the rest of the thesis, and suggests ways in which this project may be of use to other teachers and the wider profession. Part IV explores, *inter alia*, how the unexpected direction of this thesis (which resulted in the construction of two very different types of data) may provide two useful models for teachers interested in exploring the psychodynamic aspects of teaching and learning: co-authorship and psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography. The co-authorship model proved to be more closely ‘quasi-clinical’, or aligned to clinical method. The co-authorship approach thus offers a method which might create dialogue, exchange and co-construction of new knowledge about the psychodynamics of particular teaching experiences, with one participant drawing on psychoanalytic processes and knowledge, and the other on teaching. In contrast, the psychoanalytically-informed autoethnographic approach is perhaps more suited to those with some personal experiences of analysis or psychotherapy, and what is presented there provides one potential model for those wishing to deepen their own understanding of their interior, psychic – one might say ‘spiritual’ – identities as teachers, and in the process become better able to tolerate the demands placed on them by what is an inherently demanding profession.

This introduction (the first chapter in Part I) aims to assist the reader in approaching the rest of the thesis; the other three chapters in this part cover literature (Chapters 2 & 3) and methodology (Chapter 4). The next two chapters (presenting a literature review) thus frame the whole project,

presenting an argument of the importance of a psychodynamic approach and its relevance to secondary school teaching.

To reiterate, the literature review which follows immediately after this introduction is in two parts: Chapter 2 looks at psychology, psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and presents a summary of Jungian and other key ideas about the unconscious; Chapter 3 is focused on education and teaching, and presents some key issues regarding how psychoanalysis (broadly defined) and psychotherapy have impacted on teaching, education, learning and schools.

Typographical and bibliographical conventions

Double inverted commas, “thus”, will be used to enclose actual quotations from texts, transcriptions or field notes; single inverted commas, ‘such as these’, will be used for stylistic emphasis, or to serve as ‘scare quotes’ to point to terms or words that might be particularly problematic or in some other way dubious (beyond the dubiety that is inherent in all language).

If a pseudonym is used, it will be marked on first use with single inverted commas ‘thus’; its subsequent use in the text will be without indication.

With two exceptions, the Harvard system of references has been used, in accordance with the practices of the University of London: the exceptions are references to works by Jung or Freud, where I have in most cases followed the convention used in Jungian studies and psychoanalytic studies of citing the either Collected Works (of Jung) or the Standard Edition (of Freud). Thus, *Psychology of Religion* is referenced (CW 11) rather than (Jung, 1958), and *Civilisation and its Discontents* as (SE 21). Part of the justification for following

this approach is that several of the Jung texts were published in the same years, and the enumeration by volume should make this slightly easier to follow; I have also followed the convention in Jungian studies of citing the numbered paragraphs, rather than the page number, within each of the volumes in the *Collected Works*; page numbers have been used with regard to the references to the Standard Edition of Freud.

US or Australian spellings in cited literature have been silently changed to the Standard British English equivalent.

An ellipsis in brackets, thus [...], indicates the editorial removal of some material. In the transcriptions, an ellipsis without brackets is used to mark a hesitation, pause or some other interruption in the flow of speech.

Where transcriptions are presented in the text, a timestamp in brackets, thus

[00:01:43-7]

is periodically inserted into the text, these having been applied during the transcription by a function of the software.

Chapter 2

Literature Review, Section 1:

Terms, Concepts and the

Importance of a Psychodynamic

Approach

Introduction

This chapter provides the first half of a literature review. It presents the key concepts and terms used throughout the thesis and provides a critical review of relevant work in the fields of psychoanalysis and psychodynamics. It also provides an explanation of the difference between the terms psychoanalytic and psychodynamic, and an explanation of key Jungian concepts that inform the thesis. It looks at how Kleinian Object Relations theory (drawn on in the data and analysis sections, below) sits alongside a Jungian theoretical framework, explores the tensions between these theories and provides a rationale for including both theoretical approaches. It clarifies differences between Jungian and post-Jungian approaches to the unconscious, and provides an outline of Jungian approaches to transference and how these might be distinguished from Freudian approaches. Chapter 3 looks at how ideas

drawn from psychoanalysis and other related psychologies might impact on education, teaching and learning; together and with the over-arching methodology chapter (Chapter 4) these literature review chapters frame the primary data and associated methods presented in Parts II and III (Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9).

Psychoanalysis, Analytical Psychology, and Other Splits in the Psychoanalytic Movement

This thesis aims to show how ideas from the psychoanalytic movement and experiential knowledge about psychotherapy can help us understand particular aspects of teaching and learning. As a prelude to the primary data created in this project and its analysis, a short summary of the complex history of psychoanalysis (Jung, Freud, Melanie Klein, Sandor Ferenczi, Adler, their colleagues and their followers) will help readers unfamiliar with it.

To some readers, it may be a surprise to have a certain amount of history in a social sciences thesis. Partly this is down to professional habitus: I was trained in historical method² – an experience that shaped how I taught literature and drama – and that foundation forms a certain way of thinking about how ideas need to be understood in relationship to their histories. However, the inclusion of this historical material is not simply an uncritical act or a bad habit: deciding what history is told here – and how – is an inherently critical process that has required selection, editing and curating so as to

² I completed the MA(RCA) in History of Design at the V&A Museum and Royal College of Art, 1991-'93: this is an extraordinary two-year course I am very grateful to have been able to have experienced, taught jointly by one of the world's leading art colleges and one of the world's leading museums.

present an analytic and reflexive account that supports particular aspects of the thesis. Specifically, the inclusion here of a brief historical narrative backs up the following points which underpin the research:

psychoanalysis, as established and defined by Freud and his successors, is not and has never been the only theoretical model of the unconscious;

despite the disputes, a critical account of the history highlights points of commonality between the different psychoanalytic schools (and the language that indicates these shared ideas); and

using psychoanalytic thought (broadly defined) to understand aspects of education is a theme that runs through the twentieth century, and – despite frequently being forgotten by those in schools or by teachers – is one that has been part of psychoanalytic writing since its inception.

The last of those points (psychoanalysis and schools) is the focus of Chapter 3; this chapter sets out concepts and terms used throughout the thesis, and provides a critical account of relevant work in the fields of psychoanalysis and psychodynamics. I now turn, therefore, to the question of Freud, Jung, splits in the psychoanalytic movement, and contestations for ownership of the unconscious.

Though Freud is for many ‘the father of psychoanalysis’, psychoanalysis did not emerge out of nowhere, nor was Freud alone in the field at the time. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, significant numbers of clinicians and scientists were exploring the aetiology of mental disorders, and the relationship of the mind to the body. Freud’s own first sortie into the terrain – a year or so before he coined the term ‘psychoanalysis’ – was in fact a joint publication (*Studies in Hysteria* (1895)), co-authored with Josef Breuer; other names working on the same questions in the period 1890-1910 include

Richard von Kraft-Ebbing (whose *Sexual Psychopathy: A Clinical-Forensic Study* was first published in 1886), Stanley Hall (who founded the *American Journal of Psychology* in 1887), Alfred Adler, Sandor Ferenczi, Eugen Bleuler and, of course, Carl Jung (not to mention Sabina Spielrein, who – as John Kerr explains in his *Most Dangerous Method* (1995) – played such a significant rôle in understanding the clinical impact of counter-transference). Bleuler (Jung’s mentor) wrote the first ‘big book’ on schizophrenia (*Dementia Praecox, or the Group of Schizophrenias*, 1911), and it is often forgotten that in 1905 Jung devised (in an elaboration of Freud’s free-association experiment) a defensible, replicable, test to measure which associations might contain emotive material (Kerr, 1995: 95). As Clifford Mayes puts it succinctly, “almost all of the elements of Freudian psychiatry had already been postulated and explored by researchers for many decades – and in some instances even a century” before Freud began his writing in the field (Mayes, 2009: 543). Freud might be regarded by many as *the* founding father of psychoanalysis, but this is historically and critically inaccurate: there were numerous fathers and mothers, and the movement has a diversity and complexity that is not always as widely recognised as it should be.

Jung and Freud developed a close friendship and working relationship through the first decade of the twentieth century, but as Jung’s ideas evolved and diverged from Freud’s framework, theoretical divergences caused tensions that by 1912-13 had reached crisis point and, eventually, their friendship ended. The break was institutionalised when, on 10 July 1914, the Zurich Psychoanalytical Society (which Jung headed) voted to leave the International Psychoanalytical Association, and renamed itself the ‘Association for Analytical Psychology’, giving the reason that “Freud had established an orthodoxy that impeded free and independent research” (Shamdasani, 2009: 201). This split appears to have thrown Jung into some kind of a breakdown

in the years immediately following; the experience (which included a systematic process of exploration of his own psychology and unconscious) formed the basis of his investigations into his own interior life (and borderline psychotic experiences), recorded in *The Red Book* (a remarkable manuscript and work of art, finally published in facsimile only in 2009 (Jung, 2009)).

Jung was not alone in being excluded from ‘orthodox’ Freudian psychoanalysis: Alfred Adler and Sándor Ferenczi also had to leave Freud’s inner circle (Adler arguing that other drives beyond the instinctual might motivate the psyche, Ferenczi because of his defence of the victims of abuse, whom he argued – in the face of Freud’s theorising on the matter – were *not* just fantasising about what might have happened to them), and no doubt there will have been others. For some of those excluded from full communion with Vienna, the only route open to them was the formation of schismatic schools of thought: Alfred Adler founded the Society for Individual Psychology in 1912, just as Jung founded the movement that would become Analytical Psychology. It is Analytical Psychology (‘Jungian’ and ‘post-Jungian’ psychoanalysis) to which I have been drawn, and which forms my approach to the unconscious that underpins this thesis.

Jung’s break with Freud was about many things, but central to it appears to have been that openness of Jung’s to the possibility that it might be legitimate to approach the unconscious with something other than a scientific, rationalistic understanding of knowledge (the pragmatic, inductive approach which I have been exposed to in the preparation and research for this project). Some might see the arcane and fantastical visual world of *The Red Book* simply as evidence of madness, and Jung’s failure to throw out religion (in one form or another) as the acts of a neurotic, clinging to a safety blanket. For many, Jung and the Jungians’ atavistic pursuit of the symbolic and the ‘spiritual’ is nothing more than a defence against the anxiety looming in the godless

universe that Freud and modernism were allowing to be imagined. For others, however, one of Jung's lasting contributions to mental health (shared with other schools of therapy) has to be the creation of a space in which such symbolic language and spiritual and religious ideas can be explored as part of 'normal', 'healthy' life (and not simply regarded as a defence mechanism, a function of repression, or an opiate).

For this thesis, one of the important consequences of that break between Jung and Freud is as much about methodology as it might have been about psychotherapy (or theology), in that Jung's alternative model of the psyche not only allowed for questions of the spiritual to be integrated into psychoanalytic thinking, but also afforded certain distinctive philosophical possibilities. Freud had also seen the philosophical consequences of his theoretical framework, and his assertion that psychoanalysis was a 'new science' had, in his view, far-reaching consequences:

the scientific spirit brings about a particular attitude towards worldly matters; before religious matters it pauses for a little, hesitates, and finally there too crosses the threshold. In this process there is no stopping; the greater the number of men to whom the treasures of knowledge become accessible, the more widespread is the falling-away from religious belief – at first only from its obsolete and objectionable trappings, but later from its fundamental postulates as well. (Freud, SE 21: 38)

This location of Freudian psychoanalysis within science did not of course ultimately prove successful, as Karl Popper has shown (Popper, 1969). Jungian models of the unconscious, however, are framed very differently, deploying an appeal to the transcendent – that is to say, positing a reality that lies behind physical existence. As well as creating a space for ideas of the

spiritual, this postulate of a reality behind consciousness that cannot be fully grasped can be successfully mapped onto new models of depth ontology, such as the claims made by Critical Realist philosophy. This is a theme that runs through this thesis, and is also explored in more detail in the methodology discussion in Chapter 4.

The Second World War scattered psychoanalysts of various kinds, modalities and pedigrees across Europe, the Americas and beyond, and other forms of analysis and psychotherapy grew up alongside those based on the theories of Jung, Adler, Freud and Ferenczi. London proved to be Sigmund and Anna Freud's last home, and through the 1930s, '40s and '50s became a centre for a number of very important figures in the psychoanalytic movement, including Melanie Klein, Wilfred Bion, Donald Winnicott, John Bowlby and Michael Fordham. These theorists and practitioners have had a significant impact on my thinking, and are heavily quoted in the wider literature that explores the links between learning and psychoanalysis; I outline here some of the key ideas that have formed the background to this research, and which my work aims to integrate into a post-Jungian understanding of psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and psychology.

Melanie Klein is a key figure in the emergence of 'object relations theory', the theory that attempts to describe how the infant's very earliest experiences of both nurture and distress become internalised as 'objects' within the psyche and thus form the underlying structure of the mind (introducing the ideas of the 'good breast/bad breast' as part of this theoretical framework). Klein built on and elaborated the concepts of projection and splitting: in projection my emotions are in some way not accepted by me and thus become *projected* onto you, so that I see my feelings in you; in splitting, a complex experience or phenomenon is divided into simpler, often opposing components, in a kind of grim mental divorce. Klein was also the first to name the concept of

projective identification (Klein, 1946: 8), in which I begin to feel (that is, identify) with your denied, projected emotions. Wilfred Bion was a psychoanalyst and former officer in the Tank Corps (who been made a member of the Distinguished Service Order following conspicuous acts of gallantry in France during the First World War). With Melanie Klein, Bion was part of the London object relations school and worked on ‘containment’, group processes and thinking, exploring how the mother’s ability to process the infant’s difficult feelings might be the underlying basis of both thought and language. Donald Winnicott’s work on object relations further explored early childhood experience, making some major contributions to the field which emphasised the importance of play and introducing into object relations theory the notion of the ‘good enough’ mother (the mother whose containment of the infant’s distress may not be perfect or completely consistent, but is ‘good enough’ to be effective). Michael Fordham is less well known, but was a key figure in analytical psychology circles in England after the Second World War, helping found London’s Society for Analytical Psychology and – crucially for the direction of that society – finding a way to integrate object relations theory (which had its roots in the Freudian tradition) with Jungian approaches to the unconscious. These ideas are unpicked in more detail in the sections below that deal with Jungian approaches to object relations, post-Jungian infant development theory and Fordham’s Jung-Klein hybrid (p. 75-82).

This complicated, conflicted and contested early history of the psychoanalytic movement laid down the basis for the movement that was once simply ‘psychoanalysis’ to be split into strands or what the analyst and historian Arnold Cooper describes as “a plurality of orthodoxies” (cited in Young-Bruehl and Dunbar, 2009: 9). Young-Bruehl and Dunbar divide the movement into six key “theoretical orientations”: Jung and the Jungians;

“British” (i.e. Kleinian after 1926, and “Independents” after 1950); “French” (i.e. “Lacan and Lacanians; non-Lacanian”); Freud and the Freudians (after 1938 “mostly in England and America”); Adler, his former intern Otto Rank and other “social and cultural theorists”³ and “the Budapest School”, which takes Sandor Ferenczi as a starting point (2009: 10). Five of these six competing strands within psychoanalysis (the exception is the French school) have their roots in unreconcilable debates with orthodox Freudianism, either discussions and disagreements between Freud, Jung, Adler and Ferenczi in and around 1900-1920, or later debates for the contested ‘Freudian inheritance’ between Anna Freud and Melanie Klein in London in the 1940s, ‘50s and ‘60s. Critically, this taxonomy categorises Jungians as a branch of psychoanalysis.

This does make vocabulary at times difficult: ‘psychoanalysis’ might be a term broadly applied to all six schools of thought (and from the outside look to be pretty much the same sort of thing), but when in casual usage a Freudian describes their own thinking as “wholly psychoanalytic”⁴ they mean by that to exclude other approaches to the unconscious. Other writers (such as Young-Bruehl and Dunbar, quoted above) freely use the term to include all six key strands, which they are happy to accord some equal sense of ‘orthodoxy’ – possibly so as to make a distinction with the wilder forms of therapy (such as Primal Therapy⁵) or those interventions which are psychological but not psychodynamic (such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy⁶). What makes things

³ Adler’s commitment to social and political action on the part of the psychoanalytic movement had been an element in *his* split with Freud.

⁴ As was said to me by one Freudian on 22 March 2018, when describing the teaching programme of their master’s degree.

⁵ As in the ‘Primal Scream’: Arthur Janov’s therapy based on the idea that the trauma of childbirth underlies all neurosis.

⁶ A highly politicised debate rages about the relative clinical advantages of CBT versus psychoanalytic or other depth psychotherapies. CBT differs from psychoanalytic approaches by being focused on specific, conscious goals (rather than allowing material to surface from the unconscious); by being limited to a short sequence of usually six sessions

further complicated is that within each strand there are additional subdivisions. In, for example, the movement founded by Jung, there are certainly ‘Jungians’, but there are also analytical psychologists, analysts, and others who might prefer the label ‘post-Jungian’.

Jungian and Post-Jungian Approaches

At the time of writing, Jung has been dead for over sixty years and the school of thought he founded has moved on, built on the further writings of innumerable other ‘Jungians’ and ‘post-Jungians’. Just as ‘psychoanalysis’ is a complex term laden with different nuances and interpretations, so is ‘Jungian’. To start with, there are issues with using the term ‘Jungian’ in the first place – Jung himself reportedly rejected the term, arguing that there was only one Jungian, he himself (Samuels, 1985: 2), and his own preferred name for the school of psychoanalysis to which he belonged was ‘analytical psychology’. Labelling the approach ‘analytical psychology’ (rather than ‘Jungian psychology’) has the advantage of liberating it from the risk of being over reliant for its identity on the ideas of its founder. And no doubt that is the reason why some writers stick rigidly to the term ‘analytical psychology’ in contradistinction to the Freudian ‘psychoanalysis’ (though if one has to write about this material for any length of time, it quickly becomes obvious that the term ‘analytical psychology’ suffers from lacking a simple adjective, in the way that psychoanalysis has ‘psychoanalytic’). Just to add to the complexity, Murray Stein, past president of the International Association for

(as opposed to being open-ended); and by explicitly addressing symptoms of psychic distress or discomfort, rather than their underlying causes.

Analytical Psychology, favours the term ‘Jungian Psychoanalysis’ as a good description of what it now is (Stein, 2010: xv).

Others choose to label themselves ‘post-Jungian’: this may be because many feel the need to introduce distance between themselves and the personal character of Jung, or because of work taking the school in any number of different directions, away from its own orthodoxy. What does it mean to be ‘post-Jungian’? Writing in 1985, Andrew Samuels attempted to summarise the number of different ways of classifying analytical psychology that had emerged in the twenty-five years or so following Jung’s death, and offered the following categories:

orthodox, unorthodox (or ‘neo-Jungian’) and ‘central’;

London School versus Zurich School;

second or third-generation; and

‘Classical’, ‘Developmental’ and ‘Archetypal Schools’. (Samuels, 1985: 11-15)

The ‘Orthodox/unorthodox/central’ model was devised by Jung’s pupil, Alfred Adler, and is based around an idea of a “continuum” in which “the orthodox group continues to use Jung’s concepts and approaches in more or less the form and manner in which he left them” (p. 11), whereas the unorthodox “neo-Jungians” at the other end of the spectrum “have modified Jung’s concepts by attempting to integrate psychoanalytic concepts [...] in England from Klein and Winnicott”. This latter element was thought by Adler (a Jung loyalist) to have the associated risks of moving away from radically inductive method to an approach which risks being “reductive” (p. 12). The ‘Central’ approach is described as sitting somewhere in the middle.

The London/Zurich distinction was devised by Michael Fordham, and is based on approaches to training. For Fordham, the ‘Zurich’ style was characterised as following an “idiosyncratic” training route based “on Jung’s later [clinical] style”, to be contrasted with the ‘London school’ (led by Fordham himself) which was marked by an openness to ideas from other traditions and “a good deal of interaction with psychoanalysts”, notably the Kleinians with their emphasis on phantasy and countertransference (p. 13). It will be obvious that in this model, the ‘London school’ of post-Jungians could be taken to fit the ‘neo-Jungian’ or ‘Central’ approach in the Adler scheme (though anyone familiar with Fordham’s work would reject the suggestion that his approach is in anyway reductive – an accusation made by Adler of the ‘neo-Jungians’).

The division of post-Jungians into the ‘second and third generations’ Samuels credits to Naomi Goldenberg (Samuels, 1985: 14). In this model Jung is “the epistemological core” with those in the ‘second generation’ being disciples of Jung, and those in the third generation being “people who do not feel any responsibility to Jung personally although they recognise his influence”.

The final taxonomy in the set offered by Samuels is one he devised himself (Samuels, 1985: 15). In grouping post-Jungians into ‘Classical’, ‘Developmental’ and ‘Archetypal Schools’ Samuels aimed to summarise the theoretical debates within post-Jungian thought that were active at the time of his writing. In this grouping, the Classical School was taken broadly to follow the framework established in Jung’s writing, the Developmental School might be considered similar to Adler’s ‘neo-Jungians’ (in acknowledging the influence of London-based psychoanalysts) and the Archetypal School could be considered to have given a greater theoretical and clinical import to transference and countertransference processes, and to the ideas of the collective unconscious and archetypes.

I choose to describe my approach as both Jungian *and* post-Jungian. In so doing, I don't mean to be deliberately obscure, though I realise the ambiguity might provoke some readers, and be greeted with scepticism by others. By choosing that double label, I mean to indicate that the writings of Jung and Jungians and the experiences that I have had with Jungian analysts, psychotherapists and in various seminars have been profound, formative influence on me, and that I view Jung's writing with affection, and not to be rejected; but by acknowledging the reality of being 'post-Jungian', I also seek to acknowledge the criticisms of aspects of Jung's approach, place a certain distance from the framework he constructed, and acknowledge what might be learnt from other modalities and traditions. I adopt that position not least because of some difficult debates about race and racism in certain aspects of Jung's exploration of the symbolic world of the unconscious (Dalal, 1988; Samuels *et al.*, 2018; Samuels and Rycroft, 1988). Similarly, I cannot but be influenced by ideas from other areas of the broad psychoanalytic tradition (I have read Bion, and Klein, Winnicott, and Freud – and such reading cannot be un-thought).

One of the arguments I make through this thesis is to reiterate Jung's repeated assertion that his theories were exactly that, theories or hypotheses – meaning that an over-rigorous obsession with the theoretical details of Jung's formulations is a significant error. By adopting a Jungian/post-Jungian approach, I also seek to acknowledge the theoretical progress made which has opened up spaces for those working in a Jungian mode to more strictly psychoanalytic thinking (such as object relations theory, Kleinian ideas such as projective identification and other ideas that can be assimilated from the long Freudian tradition). I am trying to suggest – in what might be characterised as a particularly Jungian way – that it might be possible to be both-and, rather than either-or.

This pragmatic stance – motivated now by a sensitivity to the radical unknowability of the unconscious, and an awareness that any attempt to describe what cannot fully be known is destined to fail – is one that I was introduced to during the pre-clinical Foundations Course offered by the Society of Analytical Psychology, and which reflects Jung’s own caution about what is known, what there is to know, what can be known about psychology and the psyche:

absolutely everybody, even the most unqualified layman, thinks he knows all about psychology as though the psyche were something that enjoyed the most universal understanding. But anyone who really knows the human psyche will agree with me when I say that it is one of the darkest and most mysterious regions of our experience. There is no end to what can be learned in this field. Hardly a day passes in my practice but I come across something new and unexpected. (Jung, CW 12: 2)

There are some key points that can emerge from this discussion about Jungian and post-Jungian thinking that I would like to emphasise: the importance of an inductive as opposed to a deductive method when interpreting psychological phenomena; and what one might now call a ‘critical realist’ scepticism about epistemology in relation to the unconscious.⁷

⁷ The relevance of Critical Realism to this research is explored in more detail below, in Chapter 4.

Commonalities 1: Clinical Theory versus Meta-Psychology

The territory is contested. There are many voices. There are extraordinary ideas, and innumerable competing theories. And yet, there are some things in common: because it is possible to bracket-off the contested theories, and focus instead on the clinical processes those theories aim to explain or explore – clinical processes about which most analysts, psychotherapists or scholars have a shared understanding.

As far back as 1946, when explaining (in passing) his perspective on certain aspects of his break from Freud, Jung commented that “while I always recognised the truth of his conclusions as far as the facts were concerned, I could not conceal my doubts as to the validity of his theories” (CW 17: 128). That is to say, whilst both Freud and Jung shared a perspective on the observed psychological or psychic phenomena, their disagreements about the explanatory theories proved irreconcilable. This is the vital distinction between clinical phenomena (the existence of which are agreed across a broad base in the psychoanalytic movement) and the contested models that attempt to explain how these phenomena work – a distinction between the ‘clinical’ and the ‘meta-psychological’.

These concepts – the ‘clinical’ versus the ‘meta-psychological’ – were first defined in those terms by George Klein in the 1970s, with Klein making the same distinction as Jung, and choosing to use Freud’s idea of the speculative meta-psychological theory (this is a categorisation also recognised in qualitative research methodology – see Steinar Kvale (1999)). In his *Research on the Couch*, Hinshelwood (2013) develops George Klein’s work and names these two groups Type 1 and Type 2. For Hinshelwood, Type 1 (the clinical group) contains the ideas more likely to be generally accepted by different schools (Hinshelwood, 2013: 118). Type 2 are the meta-psychological

theories that divide theorists and practitioners, the contentious shibboleths like penis envy, the mother archetype or the frustrating breast that, dropped into a seminar, mark one with the sign of one's father (or mother), and label one Freudian, Jungian, Kleinian, Lacanian or whatever.

In his list of 'Type 1' or 'Clinical' ideas, Hinshelwood has the following: "resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations"⁸ and transference/counter-transference, [...] which are experience-near [...] in the psychoanalytic session", and are described by him as the ideas that "unite" psychoanalysts (p. 118). We might also add to that list containment (as an idea that amplifies elements of object-relations theory and transference) attachment, depth therapy, the therapeutic alliance, fantasy and possibly the unconscious itself (although even here there are distinctions: as we have seen, Jungian ideas of the unconscious certainly differ from the Freudian in respect to issues such as the ontological questions of meaning and purpose). It is also worth noting that a quick look at Hinshelwood's list suggests that ideas from the meta-psychological realm can in time work their way into the group of paradigmatic, clinical theories, since not all of the ideas Hinshelwood now lists as uncontroversial were always so 'generally accepted'.

I follow Hinshelwood, George Klein, Jung and others in finding it helpful to bracket-off sectarian distinctions of meta-psychological theory from those clinical concepts and phenomena that are widely recognised, supported by empirical evidence derived from clinical practice, and which come with extensive clinical literature. I also argue that this distinction between observable clinical phenomena and the speculative and contested meta-psychological theories about them maps onto the depth ontology of Critical

⁸ Though it should be noted that the inclusion of object relations in the list of clinical ideas that are shared across the different schools of psychoanalysis is controversial – see the discussion on hermeneutics and the purpose of psychoanalysis in Chapter 4.

Realism. Critical Realism similarly distinguishes between experience-near events and experiences and the ‘real’ mechanisms that under-pin those actual experiences (Scott, 2000: 14). This is an argument developed in more detail in the methodology chapter (Chapter 4).

The distinction between the clinical and the meta-psychological also helps in offering a definition of what is the core interest of this project, and that which I argue is both readily found and possibly repressed in the day-to-day experience of teachers: resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, the therapeutic alliance, fantasy, and the impact of the unconscious itself.

It is those ideas (whose existence and utility are broadly recognised across most modes of psychotherapy or psychoanalytic thought and research) that those working in a ‘psychodynamic mode’ focus on.

Commonalities 2: the Psychodynamic

I am suggesting, therefore, that we can use the term ‘psychodynamic’ as a proxy for ‘clinical psychoanalytic phenomena’ – Hinshelwood’s Type 1 Clinical Theories – and I am suggesting that it is productive to deploy this theory in the study and practice of teaching. This project of recontextualising the concept of the psychodynamic from the clinical domain into the world of practical teaching is inherently innovative and critical, if we take criticality to mean an informed “questioning, challenging approach to knowledge and perceived wisdom” which leads us to scrutinise ideas and then question ideas and practices “in the light of our own values, attitudes and personal philosophy” (Judge, Jones and McCreery, 2009: 9).

My argument is that what happens between teachers and pupils is at times ‘psychodynamic’, and in selecting that word ‘psychodynamic’, I have deliberately chosen a clinical construct, one which points to the clinical phenomena familiar in the psychotherapists’ consulting room (and which at least in part brackets-off meta-psychological theory). I also hope that in the term ‘psychodynamic’, I might have found a word that would prove more accessible and less daunting to teachers – and less subject to unfruitful challenge or outright rejection than other terms (such as the psychoanalytic, or the Jungian). However, the use of this expression may raise questions for some readers, including what exactly is meant by ‘psychodynamic’? why use ‘psychodynamic’ rather than ‘psychoanalytical’? and if one is Jungian, why not use the term ‘Jungian’?

The term ‘psychodynamic’ is a *clinical* one, largely used by therapists, practitioners and regulatory agencies. The word is widely used to apply to the psychodynamic trainings that are offered by a range of universities⁹ – courses which have the express purpose of training psychodynamic psychotherapists. These professional learning pathways lead to a form of clinical practice that is related to, but distinct from, psychoanalysis (in its various forms). Definitions of that ‘psychodynamic’ practice are various, and generally located in clinical literature. There are, however, some linking themes. Most writers appear to agree that psychodynamic practice is

related to and emerging from psychoanalysis (but not identical to it);

informed by reference to specific psychoanalytic theoretical models (but often open to ideas from elsewhere);

⁹ Birkbeck College, London University, and Oxford University, for example – as well as training societies such as the SAP,

rooted in a relational approach, that relies on the therapeutic alliance;
and

a form of therapy that is less intense than traditional analysis or
psychoanalysis.

In their *Psychodynamic Psychotherapy, A Clinical Manual*, Cabaniss *et al.* suggest
that

Psychodynamic psychotherapy can be thought of as a process in which
development can be reactivated and new growth can occur in the
context of the relationship with the therapist. (2017: 8)

For them, psychodynamic practice is about “making the unconscious
conscious”, “supporting weakened ego function” and “reactivating
development”, and “can be thought of as a remedial process in which
development can be reactivated and new growth can occur in the context of
the relationship with the therapist.” (p. 8). Central to the process is the
relationship between the therapist and the patient, which affords an
“abreactive” treatment (p. 9), which is about “lancing the abscess”, bringing
things to the light, or simply about self-knowledge because “knowing
ourselves better helps us to make better decisions” (p. 9). Their theoretical
model – as may already be obvious to readers familiar with the theory – relies
heavily on Freud, but not to the exclusion of other influences, such as
psychiatry and neuroscience (p. 12), and they explicitly acknowledge that
there are “many theories” about how psychodynamic processes work, arguing
that “all of our theories postulate that psychodynamic psychotherapy helps to
reactivate development in the context of the new relationship with the
therapist” (p. 11) – that is to say, the relational is central to what happens
psychodynamically.

There are other definitions. One online textbook provides the following:

The psychodynamic approach includes all the theories in psychology that see human functioning based upon the interaction of drives and forces within the person, particularly unconscious, and between the different structures of the personality.

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis was the original psychodynamic theory, but the psychodynamic approach as a whole includes all theories that were based on his ideas, e.g., Carl Jung (1912), Melanie Klein (1921), Alfred Adler (1927), Anna Freud (1936), and Erik Erikson (1950).

The words psychodynamic and psychoanalytic are often confused. [...] Freud's theories were psychoanalytic, whereas the term 'psychodynamic' refers to both his theories and those of his followers. (McLeod, 2020)

This use of the term positions 'psychodynamic' ideas as being those approaches to the unconscious that are broadly part of the long psychoanalytic tradition, but not strictly Freudian; it also maps onto my suggestion that the term 'psychodynamic' can be used as a proxy for the clinical theories that are shared among a wide range of psychoanalytic traditions.

Amanda Baker provides the following definition:

'psychodynamic' is a term applied to a model of counselling and psychotherapy whose theory and clinical practice broadly derive from psychoanalysis.¹⁰ In common with psychoanalysis, psychodynamic work understands someone's present in the context of their past and its influence on their development. It focuses particularly on relationship,

¹⁰ Baker's use of 'psychoanalysis' here should be understood in the broad sense, as referring to the wider movement, rather than the specifically Freudian school.

including the way a client forms relationship with the counsellor, and places importance on an awareness of the significant part played by the unconscious and the involuntary in our sense of ourselves and our sense of other people. Like psychoanalysis, psychodynamic counselling maintains that some of our difficulty in onward growth and learning is due to our defensive intolerance of states of confusion, disintegration, and *not knowing*. If we can bear the difficult feelings it engenders in us (both as clients and as helpers), a process of *unlearning* and *unravelling* can precede fresh discovering of our capacity for change and growth. (Baker, 2006: 173)

Some may prefer the shorter definition of the psychodynamic offered by Dunning et al. (2005: 245) as “the flow of mental forces within and between individuals and groups”.

One of the draws towards the psychodynamic approach is that it affords interdisciplinary dialogue and dialogue across the different schools of psychoanalysis. As noted above, practitioners and scholars use the term to point to ideas from the long tradition of psychoanalysis that are both shared across the different schools, and which are accessible to a non-clinical audience (I will expand on why this might be the case later in this section). The journal *Psychodynamic Psychiatry* (founded in 1973) defined such psychodynamic practice as being about “psychoanalytic exploration of man in its *broadest possible sense*”¹¹ and maintained that a journal dedicated to psychodynamic enquiry would need to operate “without adherence to the tenets of any one school” and be “open to whoever has a contribution to make in this ever-expanding field” (Arieti, 1973: 1). Similarly, the journal *Psychodynamic Practice* (originally *Psychodynamic Counselling*), founded more recently in 1994, made

¹¹ My emphasis.

the following manifesto-like statement in its first edition, calling for an approach that is both interdisciplinary and activist:

Psychodynamic Counselling will show how psychodynamic ideas can be applied to a range of occupational settings as well as to individual clinical work. It will, for example, challenge the popular view of psychoanalysis as an elitist, intensive form of clinical therapy, beyond the reach of most people, and will show that these ideas are relevant to the lives of anyone, whatever their background, beliefs and circumstances. As well as being of interest to counsellors, psychotherapists, and consultants, the journal will thus also appeal to professionals in such fields as social work, pastoral care, health care, management, and personnel. Indeed, anyone wishing to deepen their understanding of human behaviour will be a potential subscriber to the journal. (Less, 1994: 1)

In that same edition, Michael Jacobs amplified the justification for the use of the term, in contradistinction to the higher status 'psychoanalytic':

First [...] 'psychodynamic' can (and therefore should) be interpreted more widely than as a synonym for 'psychoanalytic'. One possibility is that a psychodynamic counsellor or therapist, starting from the basic tenet of the dynamics between people and within people, integrates other ways of understanding the structure of the personality [...]. 'Psychodynamic' is a more inclusive term. It opens up possibilities of dialogue [...]. It embraces the different psychoanalytic views on the structure of personality, by emphasizing the dynamic more than the structure. It allows for different models of developmental stages, as well as gender and societal issues, all contributing more dynamic dimensions to our understanding of how the psyche forms and functions.

Secondly, it is a statement about values: as a therapeutic attitude 'psychodynamic' might represent a slightly different way of understanding the relationship between the counsellor/therapy and the client. It highlights what is perhaps the most essential component in the practice of therapy and counselling, the dynamic between those engaged in it. 'Psychoanalytic', as I have already said above, suggests a therapeutic attitude of taking apart, of analysing, and of close scrutiny. It is an appropriate term for the investigative model which Freud applied to his psychological practice; and it is particularly appropriate to Freud's task, which he admits in a number of places is more about understanding the riddles of human existence than achieving therapeutic results (1933: 192). However, for some counsellors and therapists accuracy of psychoanalytic formulation is less important for therapy than the complex dynamic between themselves and their clients. This is not to forget the debt owed to the analysts who have done the necessary and painstaking 'living laboratory' work, which so deeply informs the practitioner's interactions with the client and the client's inner world.

I have one other reason for preferring 'psychodynamic' [...] I am reminded of those Anglicans who so much wanted to be like their Roman Catholic brethren that they called themselves 'Anglo-Catholics', although the validity of their orders has never yet been accepted by the Church with which they so much want to identify. [...] I prefer a description for my work and thinking that carries less risk of being identified with dogmatism and rigidity, not so much about theoretical understanding, as about what constitutes 'proper' training and practice. (Jacobs, 1994: 90-91)

That is to say, a psychodynamic approach is focused on Hinshelwood's Type 1 or clinical theories; it is pragmatic, less dogmatic, more rooted in the practical

experience – the dynamics – of intersubjective work, tolerant of emergent possibilities (and hence more accessible to a lay audience), is *not* Freudian psychoanalysis, yet remains rooted in (and grateful to) the learning of the long psychoanalytic movement. The idea of the psychodynamic focuses on those clinical ideas shared between psychoanalytic schools, and shifts the focus away from debates and disagreements about contested meta-psychological theory.

It may also assist in understanding the idea of the psychodynamic to note that in clinical training, practitioners of psychodynamic psychotherapy tend to follow a differentiated – but related – training pathway to those destined to become psychoanalysts or Jungian analysts, and are trained to practice in a slightly different way: psychodynamic trainings are often shorter, and often based on a ‘lighter’ model of clinical interactions, with therapy structured around once- or twice a-week sessions, rather than the three- or five times a-week model of most Freudian or Jungian analysis. But this approach does not preclude psychodynamic psychotherapists subsequently training as analysts. The Society of Analytical Psychology’s professional trainings, for example, are now modular: it is possible for graduates of the psychodynamic psychotherapy training to complete further study and training so as to qualify as Jungian Analysts. This distinction maps on to one made between ‘clinical’ and ‘meta-psychological theories’, with those practising psychodynamic psychotherapy receiving a clinical-focused training, whereas the Jungian analytical training is – by definition – more attentive to the meta-psychological specificities of analytical psychology.

The Jungian Psychodynamic Approach Which Underpins this Thesis

Deploying the idea of the psychodynamic to understand teaching and learning affords the possibility of bracketing off the meta-psychology (in which most teachers have minimal interest) to focus instead on those aspects of depth psychology (the psychodynamic) that are active in teachers' lives and 'experience-near': resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, the therapeutic alliance, fantasy, and the impact of the unconscious itself. Notwithstanding this, I come to use a psychodynamic approach deeply embedded in a particular meta-psychological perspective – that of Jungian psychoanalysis (analytic psychology). This forms the theoretical framework with which I approach an engagement with psychodynamic, clinical, phenomena; it is therefore appropriate to outline the basic tenets of a Jungian approach to psychoanalytic theory.

A Jungian Approach to Transference and Counter-transference

In moments of transference, emotions or ideas are *transferred* from where they originate (or where they properly belong) to where they now are; counter-transference is how the person on the receiving end of the misplaced emotions or ideas experiences the transference (and responds to it).

An understanding of transference as being central to psychotherapy emerged in the early days of the establishment of psychoanalysis as a discipline. One definition is provided by Freud in *An Outline of Psychoanalysis*:

The patient is not satisfied with regarding the analyst in the light of reality as a helper and adviser who, moreover, is remunerated for the

trouble he takes and who would himself be content with some such rôle as that of an Alpine guide on a difficult climb; on the contrary, the patient sees in his analyst the return – the reincarnation – of some important figure out of his childhood or past, and consequently transfers on to him feelings and reactions that undoubtedly applied to this model. It soon becomes evident that this fact of transference is ambivalent: it comprises positive and affectionate as well as negative and hostile attitudes towards the analyst, who, as a rule, is put in the place of one of the patient's parents, his father or his mother. (Freud, SE 23: 173)

These sorts of transference events don't just occur in the consulting room. Transferences are a part of normal life: that rude person who grumpily served you coffee this morning may still be carrying the emotions from a row they had at home; that nice person on the train was carrying the contentment from a light-hearted breakfast with their partner. Other aspects of transference can come from much further away in the past: a child grown accustomed to suspicion becomes a suspicious adult (or a self-doubting one); an abused child in some way re-lives the trauma throughout their life (or may themselves become an abuser). In a clinical setting, the transference is key, because the patient brings into the consulting room structures, ideas or feelings formed in earlier relationships that are the roots of distress: in so doing, there is an opportunity for these problematic structures, thoughts or feelings to be 're-experienced' and 're-engineered' in a safe space. Teachers similarly experience transferences all the time as pupils bring difficult emotions into the relatively safe space of the classroom from outside, from where those feelings, emotions and ideas originate.

Though in that sense 'normal', this is not an uncomplicated process: the difficult affective material that surfaces in the transference creates feelings in the recipient in response (the *counter*-transference). In psychotherapy, one of

the analyst's job is to reflect on how this reaction to the transference can be used to help the patient. One of my interests – a theme that runs through this thesis – is how well teachers cope with counter-transference, how well or not they are equipped to deal with this aspect of normal teaching processes.

It was in approaches to the counter-transference that one of the first distinctions between Freudian and Jungian approaches emerged. The idea of counter-transference phenomena (though not named as such) runs through the Freud-Jung correspondence (for example, a letter from Jung to Freud of 25 September 1907, in which Jung explores the erotic aspects of the counter-transference, and suggests the idea that pathological repression may be a necessary adjunct to civilisation (McGuire, 1974: 90)). The term 'counter-transference' emerges out of the context of this extended correspondence, and appears to be first used by Freud, in scare quotes, in a letter of 7 June 1909, responding to Jung's admission of a crisis in his relationship with Sabina Spielrein (McGuire, 1974: 231).

Then, in his address to the opening of the Second Psycho-Analytical Congress, on March 30 and 31, 1910, and again using the term in scare-quotes, Freud noted that

We have become aware of the 'counter-transference', which arises in [the therapist] as a result of the patient's influence on his unconscious feelings, and we are almost inclined to insist that he shall recognize this counter-transference in himself and overcome it. Now that a considerable number of people are practising psycho-analysis and exchanging their observations with one another, we have noticed that no psycho-analyst goes further than his own complexes and internal resistances permit; and we consequently require that he shall begin his activity with a self-analysis and continually carry it deeper while he is

making his observations on his patients. Anyone who fails to produce results in a self-analysis of this kind may at once give up any idea of being able to treat patients by analysis. (Freud, SE 11: 143-44)

And elsewhere:

For the doctor the phenomenon signifies [...] a useful warning against any tendency to a counter-transference which may be present in his own mind. He must recognise that the patient's falling in love is induced by the analytic situation and is not to be attributed to the charms of his own person; so that he has no grounds whatever for being proud of such a 'conquest', as it would be called outside analysis. And it is always well to be reminded of this. For the patient, however, there are two alternatives: either she must relinquish psycho-analytic treatment or she must accept falling in love with her doctor as an inescapable fate.

(Freud, SE 12: 159-60)

Noting that the counter-transference, for Freud, is something to be "overcome", these sorts of definitions cast counter-transference as a wholly negative phenomenon, a compulsive form of fantasy and something that should be at the very least approached with caution, and best avoided entirely by professionals like psychoanalysts and teachers. As Sedgwick notes, until the 1950s, most Freudian psychoanalysts saw countertransference as "the analyst's fantasy, as impermissible, embarrassing or professionally damaging" (Sedgwick, 2017 (1994): 1). It seems probable that part of this resistance to engaging with the counter-transference lay in the attempt by elements in the Freudian psychoanalytic tradition (up until the crisis prompted by Popper's (1969) critique) to maintain a 'clinical' or 'scientific' detachment from the complexity of subjective and inter-subjective experience.

The counter-transference is, however, more than a pathological or compulsive repetition, and the Jungian tradition was the first to be open to the power of this process, with Jung being “one of the pioneers of the therapeutic use of counter-transference” (Samuels, Shorter and Plaut, 1986: 20). In the same paragraph in which Jung acknowledges the risk of “psychic infections” in the therapist-patient relationship, Jung went on to write that

The [therapist] knows – or at least he should know – that he did not choose this career by chance; and psychic infections, however superfluous they seem to him, are in fact the predestined concomitants of his work, and thus fully in accord with the instinctive disposition of his own life. This realisation also gives him the right attitude to his patient. The patient then means something to him personally, and this provides the most favourable basis for treatment. (Jung, CW 16: 365).

In other words, the reality of the counter-transference should not be denied or negated, but recognised and worked with, used, accepted as part of the actuality of inter-subjective exchange and the therapeutic alliance. A positive attitude to the counter-transference admits to the psychic rôle of the analyst’s subjectivity in healing (as opposed to a model in which the analyst is a neutral mirror, or agent of a wordless, meaningless universe). Thus, the Jungians’ approach the analytical process is “dialectal” (Samuels, Shorter and Plaut, 1986: 18), and one in which the analyst is a *partner* in the therapeutic dyad, rather than simply the expert agent of a medical cure:

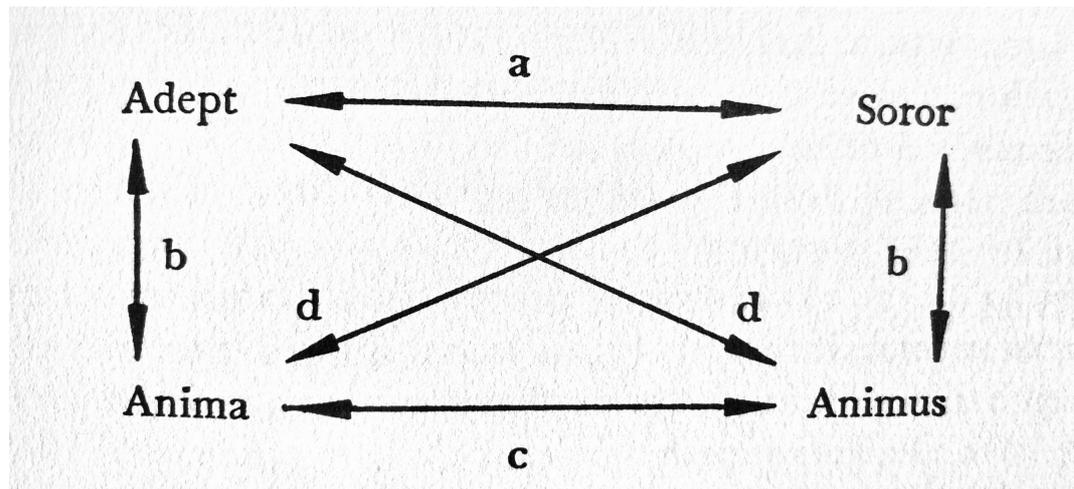
By no device can the treatment be anything but the product of mutual influence, in which the whole being of the doctor as well as that of his patient plays its part. In the treatment there is an encounter between two irrational factors, that is to say, between two persons who are not fixed and determinable quantities but who bring with them, besides their

more or less clearly defined fields of consciousness, an indefinitely extended sphere of non-consciousness [...] For two personalities to meet is like mixing two different chemical substances: if there is any combination at all, both are transformed. (CW 16: 163 (originally published 1929))

Noting the manner in which Jung brings back into the discussion of transference and counter-transference the metaphorical language of alchemy, this description highlights one of the themes emerging in this thesis: to what extent are the transference/counter-transference processes in an effective teaching-and-learning relationship an ‘alchemical’ mixing of ‘different substances’ in which if there is to be any education or growth at all, both teacher and pupil are transformed?

As Andrew Samuels and his colleagues point out, Jung’s model recognises both personal and archetypal components to transference/counter-transference (1986: 19-20). In ‘The Psychology of the Transference’ (CW: 16, Part 2, Chapter III), Jung explores the inevitability and mutuality of transference/counter-transference describing it using the language of alchemy: in the transference/counter-transference, the Adept (the expert, the teacher, the alchemist, the therapist) is in a *dialectic* relationship with the Soror (the feminine other, the pupil, the patient); in addition to the reflexive relationship between the physical person of Adept and the physical person of the Soror, each is also held in a “quaternity” with the other’s unconscious projections (their Anima or Animus)¹², expressed in the following diagram (well-known, in Jungian circles):

¹² Jung suggested that there was a gender quality to our projections, and he named these the ‘Animus’ and the ‘Anima’ – these terms are explored in more detail, below, on page 92.



(Jung, CW 16: 422)

The relationship indicated by arrow 'a' is what Jung suggests might be “an uncomplicated personal relationship” between the persons in the dyad; the two arrows labelled 'b' indicate how each individual has a relationship with their own projected unconscious elements (in Jung’s terms, their Animus or Anima) and the arrows 'c' and 'd' indicate the interplay between each person’s unconscious and conscious elements (§ 423). The interplay between real, physical persons and their projected unconsciousness is normal, archetypal (in the sense that it is part of normal human interactions) and in reality “invariably mixed-up” resulting in the process becoming infused with, as Jung puts it, “every conceivable shade of meaning” (§ 424).

The clinical application of this theory has resulted in its development in both Jungian and post-Jungian thought. In her chapter in Murray Stein’s contemporary survey of Jungian psychoanalytic ideas, Jan Wiener (2010) makes two important distinctions about current Jungian approaches to the transference/counter-transference: first of tradition (or theoretical approach) and then between working ‘in’ and working ‘with’ the transference. The theoretical distinction she makes – and one that is reported to be an internal distinction within contemporary Jungian theory – is between those following

Michael Fordham who view the transference as founded in developmental (that is to say, object relational) matters, and those for whom the transference is rooted in ‘classical’ (Wiener’s word) Jungian ideas of the collective unconscious. In passing, she implies that the former group is also alive to developments in neuroscience; these developments support the theory that certain neurological functions effect transferences and exchanges of affect between intertwined, interacting subjectivities.

Transference, explains Wiener, is “multi-beamed and multidirectional”, and can be erotic, psychotic, negative, idealising and addictive; “what is ‘transferred’ is always unconscious” (2010: 83). The transference might activate something unexpected and archetypal, and have the potential to activate the analyst’s counter-transference. This is the fact of the analytic relationship, this working *in* the transference: the transference, she implies, is part of life. Working *with* the transference occurs when the analyst decides to process the experience, and feed it back to the patient.

In her article “‘Feeling for’ and ‘feeling with’” (2013), Jean Knox also explores the history of counter-transference within the Jungian community. She comments that the “emotional contagion” of the transference/counter-transference is key to an analyst’s work because the psychobiological foundation of the intersubjective field is the attachment bond of emotional communication and interactive regulation. In surveying the history of clinical technique in this area, Knox acknowledges Michael Fordham’s idea of the ‘syntonic counter-transference’; this term describes those occasions when “an analyst perceives a patient’s unconscious processes in himself and so experiences them long before the patient is near becoming conscious of them” (Knox, 2013: 498), a phenomenon which she links – like Wiener – to recent

scientific evidence, emerging from neuroscience.¹³ She adds that this process of syntonetic counter-transference is also described by Modell, who describes how feelings connected with the patient's past are projected onto the therapist, causing these affects to also be experienced by the therapist, in what others (following Klein) might call projective identification. That phenomenon later named projective identification (in which the analyst or interlocutor feels the projected emotions of the other) is an idea which Jung appears to have formulated in his lectures to the Tavistock Clinic in 1935 (Maier, 2016: 137), later published in *The Symbolic Life* (Jung, CW 18: 322).

What I hope to have provided in this preceding section is a summary for non-specialist (likely educationalist) readers of the complex theory and some of the competing approaches to the idea of transference and counter-transference; I have also outlined the Jungian position that I adopt, and how that theory might be considered to have developed. One of the core arguments of this thesis is that for teachers, transference and counter-transference are facts of daily life, whether acknowledged or not. Other parts of the thesis develop this argument: the next chapter explores how the idea has been part of writing about education for over a century, and includes examples of other teachers who have written about the actuality of transference and counter-transference in their classroom; the autoethnographic section looks at the phenomenon from my subjective perspective.

Alchemy

Connected to the Jungian model of transference is the idea of alchemy, one of the numerous metaphors Jung found to help structure his very different

¹³ What is implied here is the mirror neurone.

approach to psychology; it is an idea that was explored throughout his writings, but notably in *The Red Book* (2009), *Psychology and Alchemy* (CW 12 (1953)) and in *The Practice of Psychotherapy* (CW 16 (1954)).

A popular understanding of alchemy is to see it as the absurd and anti-scientific project of converting lead into gold, or the quest for fantastic, mythical things of proto-science fiction, such as the philosopher's stone of legend from which the elixir of life could be extracted. After extensive researches, Jung took a different approach to the history of alchemy, and (without denying the facts of its history) saw in the alchemists' work an endeavour that pre-figured the evolution of psychoanalysis. He argued that whilst on the surface the alchemists were clearly involved in experiments with chemistry, metallurgy and attempts to alter the physical world, close readings of their work showed that they were also engaged with exploring interior, subjective change. Furthermore, from the vast number of texts Jung investigated, he provided evidence to support his argument that the alchemists were able to distinguish between the psychic and the chemical elements of their work, and sought not only to transform materials, but to change themselves:

The alchemical *opus* deals in the main not just with chemical experiments as such, but with something resembling psychic processes expressed in pseudo-chemical language. The ancients knew more or less what chemical processes were; therefore they must have known that the thing they practiced was, to say the last of it, no ordinary chemistry [...] in alchemy there are two – in our eyes – heterogeneous currents flowing side by side, which we simply cannot conceive as being compatible. (Jung, CW 12: 342)

Psychology and Alchemy is filled with examples from alchemical texts and from religious and priestly practices from around the world. One or two extracts will serve to illustrate aspects of the use to which Jung put the metaphor of alchemy, and its relevance to this thesis. The first is itself an extract, selected by Jung from a treatise by Theobald de Hoghelande, writing in the sixteenth century:

They say also that different names are given to the stone on account of the wonderful variety of figures that appear in the course of the work, inasmuch as colours often come forth at the same time, just as we sometimes imagine in the clouds or in the fire strange shapes of animals, reptiles, or trees. I found similar things in a fragment of a book ascribed to Moses: when the body is dissolved, it is there written, then will appear sometimes two branches, sometimes three or more, sometimes also the shapes of reptiles; on occasion it also seems as if a man with a head and all his limbs were seated upon a cathedra. (Jung, CW 12: 349)

Jung's point is that this record describes investigations that are self-consciously not simply chemistry, but rather – and explicitly – a form of inquiry in which “certain events of an hallucinatory or visionary nature were perceived, which cannot be anything by projections of unconscious contents” (CW 12: 350): one focus of the alchemist's inquiry was subjective, about the capacity of the alchemist to perceive (to quote other ancient alchemists) “certain fugitive spirits” (CW 12: 351) or to “see with his mental eyes” (CW 12: 352).

The second extract comes from Jung's discussion of the relationship between alchemical ideas and the practices of the Roman Catholic Mass:

By pronouncing the consecrating words that bring about the transformation [of the offertory gifts], the priest redeems the bread and wine from their elemental imperfection as created things. This idea is

quite unchristian – it is alchemical. Whereas Catholicism emphasizes the effectual presence of Christ, alchemy is interested in the fate and manifest redemption of the substances, for in them the divine soul lies captive and awaits the redemption that is granted to it at the moment of release. The captive soul then appears in the form of the “Son of God”. For the alchemist, the one primarily in need of redemption is not man, but the deity who is lost and sleeping in matter. Only as a secondary consideration does he hope that some benefit may accrue to himself from the transformed substance as the panacea, the *medicina catholica*, just as it may to the imperfect bodies, the base or “sick” metals, etc. His attention is not directed to his own salvation through God’s grace, but to the liberation of God from the darkness of matter. By applying himself to this miraculous work he benefits from its salutary effect, but only incidentally. (Jung, CW 12: 420)

In this extract I hope it will be becoming clearer how Jung begins to connect the metaphor of alchemy to the clinical processes of psychotherapy: just as the alchemist strives to change ‘sick’ metals, so the therapist aims to change suffering patients for the better and create healing; just as the alchemist recognises the miraculous qualities of his work, so the therapist acknowledges the extraordinary benefit of therapy to the patient; just as the alchemist recognises the importance to the work of their own subjective capacity to perceive fleeting visions and insights, so the therapist recognises the centrality of their subjectivity to the therapeutic process; just as the alchemist (Jung argues) recognises that his inquiries are not chemistry, so the analytical psychologist recognises the implication that their work is not strictly science; and finally – certainly in Jung’s vision – just as the alchemist blurs the boundaries between religion and scientific inquiry, so (in traditional Jungian

approaches to the unconscious) subjective spiritual and religious material is legitimate data in psychological inquiry.

Moreover, with its blending of opposites in processes of transformation and essential change (Samuels, Shorter and Plaut, 1986: 13), the metaphor of alchemy captures something of what happens in the “dialectical discussion” of the psychotherapeutic encounter (Jung, CW 12: 36) and possibly, by implication, in all dialogic processes. The metaphor of alchemy also points to aspects of the unknowable about the process of intersubjective interaction – its over-determination, if you like. To use the term is to accept that we cannot know everything that is happening in the moment of encounter, just as we can never fully know what happens intersubjectively in the moment of teaching and learning. To accept the usefulness of the idea of alchemy in teaching is to accept the emergent nature of the intersubjective moment, that something leaden is becoming gold (or vice versa, as often happens). For me, my teaching experience was shot through with these alchemical qualities – moments when change happened, and one found something sparkling in the quotidian normality of life at school.

Three Related Ideas: Spirituality, The Ego-Self Relationship and the Transcendent Function

A key element in the split between Jung and Freud was the former’s openness to ‘spiritual’ aspects of the unconscious, and also to the ‘uncanny’ (that is to say, those human experiences that for people of a scientific mindset might be regarded as nearer to witchcraft than religion). This mystical element in Jung’s thinking evolved into *The Red Book* (2009), the fascination with alchemy already noted (*Psychology and Alchemy* (1953), CW 12), and with religion, be it philosophical (*Psychology and Religion* (1958), CW 11), theological (White and

Jung, 2007) or popular (*Man and His Symbols*, 1964). The ‘uncanny’ is best captured in the famous incident of the ‘exploding bookcase’, whose ‘detonation’ during a meeting with Freud, Jung claims to have been able to predict, a claim Freud – on Jung’s account – dismissed as “bosh” (Jung, 1963 (1986): 178-9).

In my view, the significance of spirituality and religious thinking to analytical psychology can hardly be under-estimated, and it is right to see Jung’s attention to the soul and the spiritual aspects of psychology as “fundamental” (Morey, 2005: 337) to the distinctiveness of the approach of analytical psychology. Furthermore, this model of psychology has methodological and philosophical implications, since the Jungian model that tolerates the spiritual and the unknown – or transcendent – both lying behind lived experience and operating in some way *in* lived experience maps onto Critical Realism’s model of depth ontology (a philosophical position that is outlined in more detail in Chapter 4).

Jung’s explicitly metaphorical approach to the unconscious borrowed heavily from religious imagery, and his quest to demonstrate the archetypal qualities of aspects of religion meant that his studies reached far and wide across human spirituality experience. His writings draw from an extraordinarily broad range of religious thought, including (*inter alia*) north American traditional religion, Gnosticism, western European paganism, Tibetan Buddhism, Aztec religion, ancient Greek paganism, Chinese traditional religion, ancient Egyptian religion and Hinduism (CW 5, Chapter 7; CW 12: 28; and illustrations 7, 40, 41, 45, 61, 66 and 255 in CW12 respectively). So central was the spiritual aspect to the psychological process of therapy as envisaged by Jung, that he boasted of the degree to which his patients had returned to their religions, having engaged with Jungian depth therapy:

people belonging to creeds of all imaginable kinds, who had played the apostate or cooled off in their faith, have found a new approach to their old truths, not a few Catholics among them. Even a Parsee found the way back to the Zoroastrian fire-temple, which should bear witness to the objectivity of my point of view. (Jung, CW 12: 17)

The result of this was the creation in analytical psychology of an approach to psychotherapy that was open to religious and spiritual quests, seeing these as part of a *healthy* mental life, rather than as a form of wish-fulfilment or (as Freud outlines in *Totem and Taboo*), dismissing the religious impulse itself as a projection of unresolved repressed, fratricidal Oedipal fantasies (Freud, SE 13: 143). It's possible to go further. For some Jungians, Jung's model of personal growth and individuation (the dialogue between the conscious ego and the self in the transcendent function) is an inherently spiritual or religious process, one in which Jung "effectively equated the unconscious with God" (Main, 2017: 1108).

In *Aion, Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self* (CW 9ii) Jung outlines how analytical psychology conceives the ego and the self in distinction to the more standard Freudian model. In a traditional Jungian approach, the ego is defined as being

the centre of the field of consciousness; and, in so far as this comprises the empirical personality, the ego is the subject of all personal acts of consciousness (CW 9ii: 3)

And, in contrast to the standard psychoanalytical models of the 'id' (instinctive desire) and 'super-ego' (external rules and morality), in analytical psychology, the ego is held in tension with the 'self' (the whole of the personality, not just the conscious part). Jung notes that a holistic approach to what a human being *is* would acknowledge their "somatic basis" and the

“endosomatic stimuli” that make up part of their unconscious experience of life (CW 9ii: 3) – that is to say that there are physiological processes that are part of what a person is that operate at an unconscious level: there is an aspect of unconscious processing that is bodily as much as it is mental. All of this means that “the ego is never more and never less than consciousness as a whole” (CW 9ii: 7) – with the logical consequence that “all those features which are unknown or unconscious to the subject would be missing”: missing from consciousness, but not necessarily missing from the personality. Thus, the suggestion that it is useful for us to think about ourselves as having both an ego (known) and a self (unknown), which together make us who we are:

the personality as a total phenomenon does not coincide with the ego, that is with the conscious personality, but forms an entity that has to be distinguished from the ego [...] (CW 9ii: 8)

In Jung’s vision, therefore, part of the process of life is to explore that tension between the self and the ego, and bring those unconscious elements to consciousness, into the sphere of the conscious ego: thinking, living, analysing oneself is a process in which what we are (but are as yet unconscious of) is emergent. This contrasts with Freudian models in which the psyche is a Cartesian rational subjectivity, acted on by the two opposing forces of instinctive desire and an externally imposed morality. The Jungian model is rooted in a holistic notion of the somatic basis of consciousness in which the whole person is more than that which is conscious subjectivity; it is a vision of therapy as personal growth that is a dialogue between the conscious mind and that part of the person that is contingent, possible, waiting to be brought into consciousness: it is a vision of the person which is about becoming more nearly that which you could possibly be. This implies that everyone has some sort of ‘destiny’ that it is psychology’s job to connect to: that personal destiny is the self that is waiting to be discovered.

Because the idea of the self thus offers possibilities of what might be, it has a teleological quality, as Martin Schmidt, one of the SAP's training analysts describes it:

Jungian analytical psychology sees the self as many things including psychic structure, developmental process, transcendental postulate, affective experience and archetype. It has been depicted as the totality of body and mind, the God image, the experience of overpowering feelings, the union of opposites and a dynamic force which pilots the individual on his/her journey through life. This latter idea is quintessentially Jungian, for even though other psychoanalysts have talked about the self in a similar way, Freudian psychoanalysis still largely sees the self as a structure within the mind, similar to an object representation, and not as a teleological agency. (Schmidt, n.d.)

Or, in Jung's own words:

there is in the analytical process, that is to say in the dialectical discussion between the conscious mind and the unconscious, a development or an advance towards some goal or end. (Jung, CW 12 :3)

It is teleological, a metaphysical idea that indicates an interest in 'the end of things' – in this context it implies some sort of 'destiny' or fate. The possibility for this sort of language to enter clinical psychology emerges because Jung's idea of the 'self' gives a name to that part of each person that is *waiting to be discovered*; logically, this implies a belief that some part of each of us *exists*, but exists outside consciousness (and also outside of the present moment): part of each of us is waiting to come into consciousness, but exists outside the immanent present in the transcendent. I suggest that this model *requires* a depth ontology such as that proposed by Critical Realism, which distinguishes between lived experiences that can be known and understood,

and the radically alternate domain of the real that both underpins them – a domain that can be understood as transcendent (Critical Realism is discussed in more depth on pages 136-149).

Having suggested the therapeutic process can be imagined as one in which there is a ‘dialogue’ between the conscious ego and the unconscious, wider, emergent self, and noting the fact that this implies that the unconscious self is somehow part of a transcendent other, Jung gives a name to this process, calling it ‘the transcendent function’:

The conscious mind [...] is confronted with a new aspect of the psyche, which arouses a different problem, or modifies an old one in an unexpected way. The procedure is continued until the original conflict is satisfactorily resolved. The whole process is called the ‘transcendent function’. (Jung, CW 11: 780)

Elsewhere, he notes that the transcendent function is that process of dissolution and construction “in which thesis and antithesis both play their part”, putting an end to internal conflict “and forcing the energy of the opposites into a common channel [such that] the standstill is overcome and life and flow on with renewed power towards new goals”:

I have called this process in its totality the *transcendent function*, ‘function’ being here understood not as a basic function but as a complex function made up of other functions and ‘transcendent’ [in as much as] this function facilitates a transition from one state to another. (CW 6: 827-28)

As noted before, this is a distinctive model of psychology that is being offered by Jung – it sees clinical psychotherapy as focused on growth and development (rather than assuming that the basis of psychic distress is trauma

or an irresolution of certain theoretical complexes); it also seems marked by the ancient view of education as *educare*, the drawing out (of something that is waiting to be discovered).

So, then, Jung's idea of the transcendent function leads one to think of education in those terms – as an emergent process in which the as yet undiscovered contingent possibilities of what a learner can become are gradually brought into consciousness. This model has philosophical consequences: Jungian concepts of the transcendent function envisage a dialogue between the here/now and the transcendent lying behind our known experiences, just as Critical Realism conceives of a radically unknowable, transcendent 'real' lying behind knowledge and experience, and underpinning it.

Jungian Approaches to Object Relations, Post-Jungian Infant Development Theory and Michael Fordham's Jung-Klein Hybrid

Object relations theory has developed into a branch of psychology which explores how early relationships with early caregivers (usually the mother) provide the models of subject and object that form the basis of psychology – thinking, feeling, being. A more generalising definition is provided by Samuels et al:

Object relations Theory developed in psychoanalysis of understanding psychological activity on the basis of human relating to 'objects' (that is, an entity which attracts attention and/or satisfies a need and not a 'thing'). This can be contrasted with understandings

based on instinctual drives which seem to object relations theorists to be mechanistic. (Samuels, Shorter and Plaut, 1986: 101)

Emerging from Freudian psychoanalysis, objects relations theory has had wide impact, and has proven particularly attractive to those working in education because of its focus on the early child. A key name in the early development of object relations theory is Melanie Klein. As noted above, whilst my personal experiences of therapy were with Jungians of various types, and my approach is therefore broadly Jungian, I became interested in Kleinian theory around the time I first thought up this doctoral project, having happened on *The Importance of Fathers, a Psychoanalytic Re-evaluation* (Trowell and Etchegoyen, 2002) in the bookshop of the Freud Museum, which then led to another book in the same series, *Melanie Klein Today* (Spillius, 2003). This reading introduced me to the clinical application of object relations theory, which for me seemed powerfully to explain something about how we become who we are.

Though fundamentally psychoanalytic in her approach, Melanie Klein's object relations theory had a profound influence on analytical psychology in Britain, and, through the writings of Michael Fordham, on Jungian and post-Jungian thinking about child development. Rooted in the Freudian psychoanalytic tradition, Melanie Klein was nonetheless – and crucially – always of an independent perspective. Part of that independence no doubt lies in the fact that Klein's training analysis had been with Sandor Ferenczi, who was – like Jung – one of several early practitioners of psychotherapy forced to break with Freud and set up independent training routes and professional societies (Young-Bruehl and Dunbar, 2009: 11). Ferenczi encouraged Klein to develop a psychoanalysis of children (Money-Kyrle, 1981: ix), which – rooted in clinical practice – developed in a different direction to Anna Freud's approach. Accidents of Klein's life meant that she had moved to London and

established a clinical practice there several years before the Freuds arrived, exiles from Nazi Austria (Money-Kyrle, 1981: ix-x).

Klein's thinking evolved over her lifetime. Critique of Freudian theory rooted in clinical experience (exemplified in her essay 'The Oedipus Complex in the Light of Early Anxieties' (Klein, 1945)) developed Freud's thinking, with one of her core arguments being – based in theory developed from infant observation – that the mother-child dyad was the central basis of the formation of human psychology. Her assertion that "I therefore take the breast relation as the starting point in the [...] description of the beginnings of the Oedipus complex in both sexes" (Klein, 1945: 407-408) developed into a strand of psychoanalysis that struggled to be reconciled with Freudian orthodoxy (and led to the 'controversial discussions' between Anna Freud and Melanie Klein in the London psychoanalytic community in the 1940s and later).

Writing towards the end of her life, Klein summarised one key aspect of her theory as follows:

The recurrent experiences of gratification and frustration are powerful stimuli for libidinal and destructive impulses, for love and hatred. As a result, the breast, inasmuch as it is gratifying, is loved and felt to be 'good'; in so far as it is a source of frustration, it is hated and felt to be 'bad'. This strong antithesis between the good breast and the bad breast is largely due to lack of integration of the ego, as well as to splitting processes within the ego and in relation to the object. There are, however, grounds for assuming that even during the first three or four months of life the good and the bad object are not wholly distinct from one another in the infant's mind. The mother's breast, both in its good and bad aspects, also seems to merge for him with her bodily presence;

and the relation to her as a person is thus gradually built up from the earliest stage onwards. (Klein, 1952: 62-63)

The relational – how the infant relates to its mother, and how these relationships with their complex interrelated feelings and ideas become internalised as the foundations of personality and thinking – is thus central to object relations theory. This approach contrasted with the orthodox Freudian idea that the Oedipal drama is conceptualised as the ‘complex of complexes’. This relational aspect of Kleinian thinking could also represent a significant challenge to Jungian models of the psyche: how might the fundamentally contextualised model of an object relations approach to the formation of the psyche (based in the real-world lived experience of the mother and child) be made to fit with the archetypal model of classical Jungian theory, with its ideas of the transcendent function, and archetypes, potentially emanating from a collective unconscious?

One answer to this is to note – following Anthony Samuels and his colleagues – that “although he did not employ the term, Jung’s approach makes implicit use of object relations”:

Jung’s view of the psyche is characterised by (a) emphasis on relations between the various components of the psyche; (b) relations between those components and the external world; and (c) a working out of the implications of the psyche’s tendency to fragment, split, dissociate, personify and so forth. (Samuels, Shorter and Plaut, 1986: 101)

In other words, the inductive approach adopted by both object relations theorists (such as Klein) and analytical psychologists (such as Jung) lead to a similar focus on clinical phenomena, clinical processes, and what I will later in this thesis characterise as ‘psychodynamic’ phenomena; this inductive focus on a set of clinical phenomena recognised across both schools of thought,

contrasts with the deductive (and potentially reductive) approach that might be said to emerge from an over-reliance on either Freud or any other meta-psychological theory.

It was not immediately obvious to me that there might be tensions between object relations and Jungian theory; this was partly because of the clinical experiences I had had as an analysand, and partly because of how analytical psychology in England has been shaped by the work of Michael Fordham, becoming open to ideas from outside the strict Jungian tradition. As noted above, Fordham was a key figure in British analytical psychology: he was one of the founders of the London-based SAP and was one of the editors of Jung's *Collected Works* in English. A medical doctor by training, in the 1930s, he was also, in his own words,

attempting to treat children at the London Child Guidance Clinic; there I was confronted with the fact that Jungians were not only indifferent to problems of childhood but also positively antagonistic to the analysis of children. Jung did leave us a sketchy theory of development, but there was no technique for the analysis of children. (Fordham, 1993: 632)

Jung's extensive writings are indeed notorious for the relative lack of space offered to issues of child psychology or child development; though there is attention to children in *The Development of the Personality* (CW 17), which includes his essay in response to Freud's case of Little Hans, most of Jung's writing is usually characterised as focused in middle- or later-life issues of individuation (what one might call self-actuation). For someone like Fordham, trying to apply analytical psychology to work with children in the 1930s, this presented a particular problem – one he reviewed in 1993:

Other than observation [...] there were inadequate techniques to employ. So at first I simply encouraged the children under my care at

the clinic to draw, paint and tell me their dreams. In that material I found quite frequent archetypal fantasises, i.e., dreams and pictures depicting witches, giants, fairy tale and other mythological figures. [...] it was then that I discovered Melanie Klein [...] I reflected that the infant's relation to his mother's body and her insides was comparable to the hero's journey into the underworld or being swallowed by a monster – compare Jonah and the whale, which Jung had analysed in relation to the drive to enter into the mother for rebirth. (Fordham, 1993: 632)

Fordham's personal insight – rooted inductively in clinical practice – developed into the construction of professional relationships with Kleinians and other psychoanalysts (including Donald Winnicott), and led to a non-sectarian openness in the Society of Analytical Psychology, and a sustained project to investigate how insights borrowed from other psychoanalytic traditions could be put to use in analytical psychology and 'Jungian' thinking.

This project resulted in work such as the striking observation Fordham makes in *Children as Individuals* (1969: 20) about the degree to which Jung's early writing emphasised the centrality of the mother in the child's development – ideas that predate Klein's writing and the emergence of object relations theory in the psychoanalytic tradition by over a decade. The essay in question is 'the Dual Mother' (Jung, 1912), first published within the collection *The Psychology of the Unconscious*, and later as Chapter VII of *Symbols of Transformation* (CW 5), and is part of an extended reflection on mythological material emerging from the therapy of a 'Miss Miller'. Written around the time of the split with Freud, and connected to the irreconcilable debates about the nature of the libido, in 'The Dual Mother' Jung explores the idea of the mother who is *both* "she who understands" (¶ 465) and "the Terrible Mother" (¶ 543), a mother whose perceived contrasting qualities are introjected into the patient and expressed in symbolic, mythological terms. Again, this reflects a consistent

theme in Jung's vision of psychology that aspects of psychology are impersonal (mythological, or socially constructed) and other aspects clearly highly personal (and relational). What emerges in the essay 'The Dual Mother', through the extended analysis of 'Miss Miller's' clinical material, is therefore a vision of psychology which combines the archetypal with what would later be termed the relational: the 'mother' is expressed both in terms of impersonal psychology (the mythological symbol of the mother) and the personal significance (the relational) that she has in the particular clinical case.

Fordham's rejection of sectarianism in psychotherapy allowed him to articulate a 'Jung-Klein Hybrid' (the history of which is summarised in his article of the same name in the *Journal of Analytical Psychology* (1993)) which has had a lasting impact on analytical psychology in Britain and elsewhere. He showed that there were theoretical connections between Kleinian approaches and the early theoretical models Jung began to develop (and which contributed to the split with Freud) and that a pragmatic, 'post-Jungian' approach, one which affords of a certain humility in the face of the unconscious, leads one to be open-minded to ideas that emerge in other theoretical schools. Furthermore, study of the history of how the Jung-Klein hybrid developed shows that something positive emerges if one approaches psychic phenomena *inductively* in contrast to a deductive approach (in which the analysis 'reductively' seeks to test particular psychoanalytic theories, and risks fitting the observed facts to the theories).

There are, however, limits to how far different theoretical models can be combined, without risking "pastiche" – a risk that Jeffrey Rubin Morey identifies in the current movement towards 'integrative' psychotherapy (in which insights and theories from the widest range of competing psychological schools are combined (Morey, 2005: 335)). Morey's specific concern is that the 'mother' in object relations always a sign "pointing toward the person of

the analyst and hence the personal transference”, and for him this is different to the operation of the Jungian archetype as a “profound and infinitely mysterious experience of the matrix” (p. 344). I read Jung’s idea of archetype, however, as operating *both* at the impersonal level, and in the subjective – something that is, in my view, one of the key insights of the theory (and hence, there is no contradiction in this case). However, one of the advantages of adopting a ‘psychodynamic’ approach, as described elsewhere in this thesis, is that attention to psychodynamic phenomena has the advantage of ‘bracketing-off’ the question of the validity or not of the competing meta-psychological theories behind them, allowing us to concentrate on those aspects of near-experience that are accepted across the differing psychological schools.

Attachment Theory

As we have seen with the discussion about object relations theory, one of the key advantages in adopting a Jungian/post-Jungian approach is the openness to ideas from other traditions, affording the opportunity of critically assimilating these insights into an understanding about depth psychology and the unconscious (notwithstanding the need to be clear about any tensions that need to be articulated). As Fordham laid a foundation for a ‘Jung-Klein hybrid’ in object relations, so Jean Knox, in *Archetype, Attachment, Analysis* (2003), has articulated a post-Jungian position with regard to attachment theory.

Attachment theory emerged from John Bowlby’s pioneering work at the intersection of psychoanalytic thinking, behavioural psychology and ethology,

presented in his *Attachment and Loss* trilogy (Bowlby, 1969; 1972; 1980). The object relations connection is central (Bowlby had been supervised by Melanie Klein). Bowlby's articulation of attachment began as a result of a need to investigate 'hospitalism' in the late 1940s and '50s (hospitalism being the phenomenon of babies and infants dying from no obvious organic cause while on long-term stays in hospital), which Bowlby showed to be a result of the utterly disabling, destroying, loss of their mothers' presence (Karen, 1998: 67-86). Bowlby's work was later developed by Mary Ainsworth, taking observations from fieldwork and developing the 'strange situation test', from which emerged the broad characterisations of different types of attachment: secure, ambivalent and avoidant (Karen, 1998: 129-161); later experiments at Berkeley introduced a fourth category – disorganised.

The focus on the primary care-giver (most often the mother) demonstrates one area where there is a clear connection between attachment and object-relations theory, but it also offers a connection with the Jungian idea of the archetype. In this case, the mother is the archetype in question: the idea of mother is both part of our collective psychology, a common experience shared by humanity, and also a highly personal part of our individual psychology.

The fundamental basis of attachment – that a child needs what Ainsworth christened the 'secure base' (Karen, 1998: 136), and, as Harry Harlow's experiments suggested, a rich and emotionally sensitive environment, warm, secure and continuous (pp. 119-125) – has spawned a parenting movement (so-called 'Attachment Parenting'), and for some teachers has clear implications for how to run their classrooms: the UK now has a network of 'Attachment Aware Schools' (Attachment Aware Schools Network, 2021).

Containment

Writing in the Jungian in-house *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, Christian Maier describes containment as “one of the most frequently used building blocks in recent psychoanalytic theory” (Maier, 2016: 134); it is also freely used in Jungian and post-Jungian clinical practice, with a search¹⁴ of the *Journal of Analytical Psychology* generating 277 references in the past five years – including one exploring whether containment can be considered an archetype (Dehing, 1994).

It may not be immediately clear how containment and the idea of the container-contained relationship can be considered Jungian when it is most familiar to modern readers from the work of Wilfred Bion. Bion is usually located in the post-Freudian psychoanalytic tradition, and the theory of containment is often linked to Klein and Winnicott. Bion’s writings elaborate the idea of psychic containment, said to have been resonant for him because of the qualities the armoured tank had to contain and protect the vulnerable soldier (Bion had, as mentioned earlier, served in the Tank Corps during the First World War, and one can imagine how inside the tank, the terror and the reality of the trenches outside was re-experienced very differently).

In developing containment theory, Bion took forward Melanie Klein’s ideas about projective identification. The key idea in containment is that in a functioning dyadic relationship, one party projects into the safe container difficult feelings or ideas; an effective container holds onto these toxic psychic affects, reprocessing the material, giving it back to the other in a different, tolerable form; importantly, container and contained are mutually dependent, and “mother and child derive benefit and achieve mental growth from the experience” (Dehing, 1994: 434). It is easy to see how from this object-

¹⁴ Conducted on 2nd April 2021.

relations territory, Bion moved on to think about thinking itself, and its basis in the child's wordless frustration and the inter-subjective experience of difficult emotions (Bion, 1967).

There is striking historical evidence to show that Jung may have introduced the idea of containment to Bion in the mid-1930s. Between 1933 and 1948, Bion worked as a therapist at the Tavistock Clinic, which at that time “represented a school of psychotherapy dedicated to an integrative practice combining both Jung and Freud” (Addison, 2016: 569-70). In 1935, Jung was invited to present a series of lectures to the Tavistock, which were collected and are printed in *The Symbolic Life* (Jung, CW 18); we know that Bion not only attended the lectures, but was an active participant, asking three questions of Jung about a range of aspects of Jung's thinking (CW 18: paragraphs 55, 135 & 137), and the experience was one that in Maier's view “must have left a lasting impression” on Bion (Maier, 2016: 139). James Grotstein, Bion's biographer and “one of Bion's most influential pupils” (Maier, 2016: 135), goes as far as to state that aspects of Jung's lecture series had a “dramatic impact” on Bion (Grotstein, 1987: 63).

It is not hard to see why a number of people have come to this assessment. The final section of Lecture V (paragraphs 407-415 of CW 18, ranging over some seven pages) is an extended clinical analysis by Jung of a sequence of pictures drawn by a patient in analysis, diagnosed with what was then called schizophrenia, assessed as suffering from a “split in his own mental structure” (CW 18: 407). The images represent vases into which the patient has painted a range of symbolic figures – flowers, animals, snakes, a sleeping female form. What is most striking – given what we know of how Bion's work was later to develop – is the language that Jung (speaking and later writing in English) uses in the process of analysing these images. Beginning by noting that “a vessel is an instrument for containing things”, Jung goes on to explain that

our German word for vessel is *Gefäß*, which is the noun of *faßen*, that is, to set, to contain, to take hold of. The word *Faßung* means the setting, and also, metaphorically, composure, to remain collected. (CW 18: 407).

Noting that these drawings also represent attempts at drawing “a mandala” (para. 411), Jung argues that

the picture is an attempt at self-cure. It brings all the disparate elements into the light, and it also tries to put them together into that vessel. This idea of a receptacle is an archetypal idea. (CW: 409)

In this intervention, Jung offered – in 1935 – a definition of containment. He describes here an archetypal process, in which split-off psychic contents are projected into a symbolic container, in which they are processed so as to be brought to consciousness, tolerated, and reintegrated into the subject, in this case as part of a process of self-healing. It is a description that has striking resonances with Bion’s later work.

Four Other Jungian Ideas that Come into Play in this Thesis: The Shadow, Complexes, Archetypes and the Animus and Anima

Jung’s writings extend to some twenty volumes in the *Collected Works*, and the works of Jungians and post Jungians proliferate: a search today¹⁵ in my university library catalogue generated 46,359 results (though I’m sure there will have been some duplication¹⁶). Even a 100,000-word thesis can only

¹⁵ Friday, 12 November 2021.

¹⁶ (The first two hits were indeed duplicates, and both references to an article I wrote.)

begin to explore how these ideas might prove useful to teachers and those involved in education. What I have attempted to do in the summary of Jungian and post-Jungian ideas in this chapter is describe some of the theory that underpins the thesis, link these ideas with broader philosophical questions that run through it. In the penultimate section of this chapter, I want briefly to point to four other Jungian ideas that come to play in this thesis, and which are deployed later in the analysis of the primary data.

The Shadow

This is a Jungian term which has entered popular discourse. For Jung, the psychological quest is about “shedding light on the psychic background and the secret chambers of the soul” (CW 9ii: introduction, page x), a process of bringing things to consciousness which involves “self-knowledge” and “much painstaking work extending over a long period” (Jung, CW 9ii: 14). Part of that process involves approaching the individual’s shadow.

The shadow is “the thing [the individual] has no wish to be” (Jung, CW 16: 470), it is “a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality”, being composed of the “repressed”, “dark aspects of the personality” (Jung, CW 9ii: 14).

It might be thought that the ‘shadow’ (as being that part of a person’s personality or psyche which they negate or reject) is only a metaphor for the Freudian idea of the repressed. However, in offering the idea of the shadow, Jung notes that Freudian method unearthed “not merely incestuous material in the stricter sense of the word” (such as that repressed in the classical Freudian mechanisms of the Oedipus complex) “but every conceivable kind of filth of which human nature is capable” (CW 16: 144) – and it is that filth and

darkness that Jung suggests we acknowledge, both as being part of our individual personalities, and as part of what it is to be human.

There are other distinctions between the idea of the repressed and the idea of the shadow. By using the idea of light and dark, Jung's language appeals both to religious or spiritual imagery (a major theme in his work), and so connects psychic distress with spiritual questions. But whereas 'repression' in strict Freudian terms is understood by relation to other aspects of Freudian theory (trauma, primal scenes, the repressed causes of complexes), the notion of the shadow is agnostic about the contents of each individual's shadow – Jung does not specify what contents of the psyche are likely to comprise your or my shadow, but invites us to discover them: his method (as he notes in *Aion*) is fundamentally inductive (CW 9ii: 11), and, whilst noting how "psychology has profited greatly from Freud's pioneer work", he notes that

Freud's interpretive method rests on 'reductive' explanations which unfailingly lead backwards and downwards, and it is essentially destructive if overdone or handled one-sidedly. (CW 16: 146)

Those seeking to understand theirs or someone else's unconscious, Jung suggests, should be less attentive to fitting facts to theoretical models rather with the significance of the psychic contents that are offered to the consciousness:

I deliberately and consciously give preference to a dramatic, mythological way of thinking and speaking, because this is not only more expressive but also more exact than an abstract scientific terminology, which is wont to toy with the notion that its theoretic formulations may one fine day be resolved into algebraic equations. (Jung, CW 9ii: 25)

Jung thus introduces a note of scepticism, both cautioning about the limits of human knowledge, and implying (not least through the very form of the mythological and figurative language adopted) that his own ideas should be treated with equal caution: that these theories can only ever be representations of the psyche, not the psyche itself.

Complexes

Most readers will be familiar with this term, given the popularity of ideas such as the Freudian psychoanalytic ‘Oedipus complex’; the term complex was, however, introduced to psychology by Jung, and with a distinct meaning.

In the early days of psychoanalysis (when it was being defined as a discipline distinct from other areas of medicine), one of the things that brought Jung to the attention of Freud (Kerr, 1995: 59), was his 1904 paper with Riklin which developed Freud’s work on word association (Jung, CW 2: 1-498). In a field in which there is an extensive methodological debate about the degree to which data can or cannot be considered objective evidence of subjective experiences, Jung and Riklin devised an objective measure of the interior life’s projection into the physical world: by timing the delay between the stimulus and the answer in the word association test, it is possible to measure those themes which were ‘feeling toned’ for the subject undergoing the process (Kerr, 1995: 58).

In 1905, Jung went on to elaborate what could be understood as the basis of the ‘feeling toned’ phenomena, and gave a name to that which it pointed to: a complex. To introduce this idea, Jung presented the results of a word-association experiment conducted with a young man who had been instructed not to marry a girl of whom his parents did not approve. The associations

(which include pairings such as “time/not now”; “mother/wild”; “stranger/yes”, “stranger / yes, she is”), Jung argues, “are not meaningless” but tell “the story of an unhappy love-affair” (CW 2: 732)

“Such a recollection”, he continues,

which is composed of a large number of component ideas, is called a *complex of ideas*.¹⁷ The cement that holds the complex together is the *feeling tone* common to all the individual areas, in this case unhappiness. We are therefore speaking of a *feeling toned complex of ideas*, or simply of a *complex*. In our case the complex has the effect that the subject does not react by arbitrary or random connections of words, but derives most of his reactions from the complex. The influence of the complex on thinking and behaviour is called a *constellation*.

The reactions of our subject are thus *constellated by a complex*. (CW 2: 733-34)

It will be obvious that this is a very different use of the term ‘complex’ than that made of it (later) by Freud: as Samuels et al point out, Jung’s definition “rests on a refutation of monolithic ideas of ‘personality’” (1986 :31). Jung further suggests “there is no one who has no complexes, just as there is no one who is without emotions” (CW 2: 736), and clearly indicates that the hermeneutic process of giving meaning to the ‘feeling tones’ – to distress – is a key part of clinical analysis and psychological inquiry.

¹⁷ The italic emphases here are in original text in the *Collected Works*, and mark Jung’s introduction of a new term.

Archetypes (and the Collective Unconscious)

These two interlinked aspects of Jung's theories were given an extensive elaboration in *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (Jung, CW 9i, 1958), in which Jung offers two definitions of 'archetype'. The first (which he describes as the "nominal"), is clear from an extensive use in human history in "myth, esoteric teaching, and fairytale" (CW 9i: 7), and this is the notion (surely uncontroversial) that it is possible to detect across different human societies, and in different times, certain patterns of consistent tropes – such as 'the hero', 'the mother', the 'joker'). Probably also uncontroversial is that these symbols have a psychological aspect (Freud, after all, reached into Greek myth for the names of some of his key theories). More controversial is the theoretical step that Jung makes from this first point, to argue that the existence of shared archetypal material across human societies provides evidence of a 'collective unconscious'.

This second sense of the idea of the archetype, then, is Jung's *hypothetical* suggestion that archetypes are the expression of a

part of the unconscious that is not individual but universal; in contrast to the personal psyche, it has contents and modes of behaviour that are more or less the same everywhere in all individuals. It is, in other words, identical in all men and thus constitutes a common psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature which is present in every one of us.
(CW 9i: 3)

A large part of the *Collected Works* is consumed in his explorations across folklore and myth from a range of societies and cultures, investigating this hypothesis, and in efforts to enumerate the types and forms of the archetypes that are shared across human societies and which express his suggested shared, deeper "substrate".

Clearly, whilst the first definition points to rich possibilities for psychologists and researchers investigating the meaning of symbols and how they express themselves in individuals and groups, Jung's second distinction will be a step too far for many. It is important to note that (despite the extensive elaboration of his theories, and the hefty weight of the twenty-volume *Collected Works*) Jung is consistently clear that "the hypothesis of a collective unconscious" (CW 9i: 1) is exactly that – only a hypothesis. At a theoretical level, however, Jung's is a psycho-social approach *avant la lettre* – the collective unconscious is an idea that recognises the social construction of individual psychology, and resists the "problematic psychological-social dualism" which Freudian psychoanalysis is often accused of maintaining (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008: 353). The idea of the archetype has also been seen as exemplifying Jung's life-long dual commitment to science and religion, with the idea (linking psychology, myth, ethology and instinct) said to have been "influenced by biology and physics, on the one hand, and Platonic philosophy and Augustinian theology on the other", and being "explicitly characterized in Jung's later writings as having both an instinctual and a spiritual pole" (Main, 2017: 1106)

Anima and Animus

In *Aion* (CW 9ii), Jung enters gender theory (before it was so named), introducing the notion that an aspect of desire and sexual attraction includes the projection of 'contra-sexual' parts of the personality ("just as the man is compensated by a feminine element, so woman is compensated by a masculine one" (§ 27). He names these as the 'anima' for men and the 'animus' for women, suggesting that these archetypes are split-off contents of the self, gendered aspects of one's personality that cannot sit comfortably in a

particular gendered rôle. The ‘syzygy’ (literally ‘a yoking together’, borrowed from its use in astronomy or astrology to describe a conjunction in the heavens) is what occurs should these contra-sexual projections come under mutual influence; given that these activated archetypes are projections, the syzygy is often an explosive encounter:

Both these archetypes, as practical experience shows, possess a fatality that can on occasion produce tragic results. They are quite literally the father and mother of all the disastrous entanglements of fate. (CW 9ii: 41)

A Summary, Regarding Terms and Categories

I hope what will be clear from the review above is that whilst some Freudians claim the term ‘psychoanalysis’ for their specific philosophy and mode of clinical practice, psychoanalysis is a movement broader than just Freud. Throughout this thesis, therefore, I will use the term *psychoanalysis* and *psychoanalytic* in those broader senses, to point to the broad set of ideas, philosophies and clinical practices that emerge from the encounter with the unconscious that emerged *as a movement* at the end of the nineteenth century (it may assist in noting in passing that these psychoanalytic ideas are rooted in depth therapy clinical practices that are to be distinguished from the medical practices of psychiatry, which use medication or psycho-surgery to address psychological issues, rather than a talking cure).

If the context demands specificity, then I will use appropriate adjectives (such as ‘Freudian’, ‘Jungian’ or ‘post-Jungian’) to make the distinctions clear. ‘Analytical psychology’ has always specifically referred to the approach

adopted by Jung and his followers in distinction to that of Freud; ‘classical Jungian’ or ‘classical analytical psychology’ refers to an approach that loyally follows the models Jung offered in his writings. ‘Post-Jungian’ refers to approaches to the unconscious with roots in Jung’s analytical psychology, but which have developed the thinking in ways not covered by Jung in his extensive writings. As already noted, my approach is Jungian/post-Jungian: profoundly influenced by Jung and the ideas of Jungian writers and analysts, but critically open to ideas and influences from other modalities and approaches.

This chapter provided the first half of a literature review, one focused on psychoanalysis, psychodynamic theory and Jungian psychology (also known as analytical psychology). It surveyed the key psychoanalytic and Jungian concepts and terms that are used in the thesis, and provided a critical historical overview of certain central issues in the psychoanalytic movement; it offered a critical analysis of the difference between Freudian and Jungian theory – including an outline of Jungian approaches to transference and how these might be distinguished from Freudian approaches. The chapter also presented a critical account as to how Kleinian Object Relations theory can sit alongside a Jungian theoretical framework, and explored the tensions between these theories, providing a justification for the use of a ‘Jung-Klein hybrid’. The chapter included a clarification of the differences between Jungian and post-Jungian approaches to the unconscious, and a definition of the term ‘psychodynamic’ (and how it might contrast to psychoanalytic approaches).

Chapter 3, which immediately follows, is the second half of the literature review, and looks at how ideas drawn from the psychoanalytic movement (resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, the therapeutic alliance,

fantasy, and the impact of the unconscious itself) have impacted the 'real world' of education, teaching and learning.

Chapter 3

Literature Review, Section 2:

A Critical Account of Teaching's Relationship with Psychoanalysis

Introduction

The last chapter provided a survey of key terms and ideas from psychoanalysis, Jungian psychology (also known as analytical psychology), post-Jungian thinking and psychodynamics which form the intellectual approach to the unconscious and to interpersonal psychology that underpin this thesis. This next chapter (the second half of the literature review) provides a critical account of how ideas from the wider psychoanalytic movement (broadly defined) have impacted on the real world of teaching and education, have been disavowed, and the degree to which teaching has been considered a psychoanalytic endeavour. This literature review, combined with a chapter dedicated to overarching methodological issues, forms Part I of the thesis; together, these position it, providing a foundation for the primary data and its analysis which is offered in Parts II and III (Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, each of

which presents separate methods chapters to accompany data created in contrasting ways).

Readers will be struck by the number of references which follow in this chapter to the writings of either Sigmund or Anna Freud (notwithstanding the focus on Jung and post-Jungian ideas which form the bulk of the preceding one, and the underlying meta-psychological model adopted). Partly, this is because it so happens that the history of this debate appears to have been dominated at certain points by Freudians. It is also because the approach to psychoanalysis that underpins this thesis is consistent in regarding the psychoanalytic movement as a broad one. Certainly, that history of the psychoanalytic movement has been marked by splits and controversies and by contestation for the ownership of the very title ‘psychoanalysis’ at various times – but it is a movement in which there are nonetheless a number of common intersecting ideas (and notably shared clinical ideas which form the basis of the ‘psychodynamic’ approach advocated by this thesis).

Furthermore, the Jungian/post-Jungian approach adopted in this thesis, whilst respecting certain key insights from Jung and the Jungian tradition, is open to new ideas from other psychoanalytic modalities, so long as they can be critically integrated into a broadly Jungian approach. This is what Michael Fordham demonstrated was possible with object relations in his Jung-Klein hybrid, and Jean Knox showed could be done in creating a Jungian approach to attachment theory.

That I adopt a Jungian/post-Jungian approach to metapsychological theory, therefore, shouldn’t be interpreted to mean that everything Freud and Freudians have to say is rejected out of hand, nor that writers from different psychoanalytic schools might not have insights to offer about teaching and education. In this, I follow Jung, who was consistently respectful of Freud’s work and contribution, commending Freud’s work to a correspondent, even

in the midst of the Freud-Jung split in 1912 (Jung, CW 18: 1030), and acknowledging in 1953 that “Freud’s contribution to our knowledge of the psyche is without doubt of the greatest importance” (Jung, CW 18: 1069). Furthermore, looking at the *psychodynamic* aspects of teaching and learning focuses on what is *shared* amongst the different schools of psychoanalysis, and this justifies acknowledging interventions into teaching and education by writers from other psychoanalytic traditions. Deploying the idea of the psychodynamic to understand teaching and learning affords the possibility of bracketing off the meta-psychology (in which most teachers have minimal interest) to focus instead on those aspects of depth psychology (the psychodynamic) that are active in teachers’ lives and ‘experience-near’: resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, the therapeutic alliance, fantasy, and the impact of the unconscious itself.

Psychoanalytic Paedagogues

To those engaged in education studies, education management or teacher education (certainly in the English context), the current dominant preoccupations often appear to be performance standards, assessment regimes, school improvement agendas, and constantly changing regulatory frameworks. At the progressive end of education, there may be debates about ‘Assessment for Learning’, inclusion, the whiteness of the curriculum, or about constructivist approaches to teaching, but only a small number of professionals currently engage with the ideas that emerge from the broader psychoanalytic movement and address questions about the relational, the psychodynamic or the psycho-social in schools or classrooms (though there is

some evidence that this is beginning to change, and these developments are acknowledged in Chapter 10).

Whether or not teachers are currently familiar with psychoanalytic ideas and their potential use in the classroom, the question of “the Application of Psychoanalysis to Paedogogy” arose in the very early years of the psychoanalytic movement, being “first posed by Sandór Ferenczi (in Freud’s wake) at a conference in Salzburg, in 1908” (Blanchard-Laville *et al.*, 2005: 112)¹⁸. In 1914, Freud himself entered this territory, with certain ‘Reflections on Schoolboy Psychology’, in which he noted how children fantasise about their teachers, and how (in his own case) the teacher became imbued with the super-egotistical qualities of his own father (SE 13: 241–8). For Freud, the insight derived from noting this transference of Oedipal material into the classroom rendered explicable attitudes and behaviours on the part of the young people that would otherwise be beyond the pale:

These men [our teachers], not all of whom were in fact fathers themselves, became our substitute fathers. That was why, even though they were still quite young, they struck us as so mature and so unattainably adult. We transferred on to them the respect and expectations attaching to the omniscient father of our childhood, and we then began to treat them as we treated our fathers at home. We confronted them with the ambivalence that we had acquired in our own families and with its help we struggled with them as we had been in the habit of struggling with our fathers in the flesh. Unless we take into account our nurseries and our family homes, our behaviour to our

¹⁸ My translation: original text reads “l’application de la psychanalyse à la pédagogie a été posée pour la première fois par Sandór Ferenczi, lors d’une conférence à Salzbourg, en 1908 dans le sillage de Sigmund Freud”.

schoolmasters would be not only incomprehensible but inexcusable. (SE 13: 248)

In other words, transference is a fact of life for school teachers, part of the bizarre quotidian that is school.

In addition to the issue of how children and young people acted out an Oedipal drama in school, Freud also noted that there was something particular and specific in the rôle of the teacher that brought the professional task of teaching close to that of analysis. In his 1926 essay 'the Question of Lay Analysis' (SE 20: 179-258), he argued this case that there is a particular connection between teaching and psychoanalysis, one which affords the possibility that teachers might legitimately practice a form of non-medical analysis:

psycho-analysis has yet another sphere of application, [which is in] the bringing-up of children. If a child begins to show signs of an undesirable development, if it grows moody, refractory and inattentive, the paediatrician and even the school doctor can do nothing for it, even if the child produces clear neurotic symptoms, such as nervousness, loss of appetite, vomiting or insomnia. A treatment that combines analytic influence with educational measures, carried out by people who are not ashamed to concern themselves with the affairs in a child's world, and who understand how to find their way into a child's mental life, can bring about two things at once: the removal of the neurotic symptoms and the reversal of the change in character which had begun. [...]

Analysis undeniably still has its enemies. I do not know whether they have means at their command for stopping the activities of these educational analysts or analytic educationalists. I do not think it very likely; but one can never feel too secure. (SE 20: 249)

Freud's suggestion here appears to be that there could be constructed a form of therapeutic teaching – teaching interventions based on a child's established clinical need, in which paedogogy were informed by collaboration with clinical practitioners. This suggestion that teachers should engage in programmes of 'educational analysis' is clearly different to the argument in this thesis that there is something in the actions of teachers which can be understood through psychoanalytic theory as being inherently 'psychodynamic'.

Freud elsewhere engaged with the broader issue of the relationship between education and psychoanalysis. At another point in 'the Question of Lay Analysis' – and distinct from that other proposal that 'analytic educationalists' could be active in schools – he described the emergence of a distinct category of non-medical analysts. These "teaching analysts" (SE 20: 249) would not be involved in clinical treatment (with its attention to the alleviation of psychic distress, acute paranoia or hysteria and the like), but serve rather to provide a didactic analysis for professional training in "all the sciences which are concerned with the evolution of human civilization and its major institutions such as art, religion and the social order" (SE 20: 248). This was a form of analysis *as* teaching, something an undergraduate or post-graduate student might opt to take in the course of their normal studies – an alternative to a dull research methods course, or a module in sociology, for example. Such didactic analysis was not, however, an invention of Freud's. Indeed, Jung is normally credited with the idea that it should be part of a clinical training, and one such didactic analysis was undertaken by Jean Piaget in 1922/23 (somewhat before Freud's essay on the subject in 1926). Piaget's chosen analyst was none other than Sabina Spielrein: "Piaget recalls that he had 'his didactic analysis' every morning 'at eight o'clock for eight months' – he

wanted to be analysed ‘as a learning experience’” (Vidal, 2001: 141) (McGuire, 1974: note to page 228).

Piaget’s analysis amounted to something like 1,460 hours of therapy (assuming he and Spielrein took one day off at the weekend), and we can be confident that it will have represented the formative “learning experience” Piaget sought for his post-doctoral studies. Piaget, of course, went on to become one of the most influential educationalists of the twentieth century, credited with establishing child-centred paedogogy – however, the fact that he had a didactic analysis (by an analyst of such significance as Spielrein, herself intimately connected with both Freud and Jung) is no longer widely recalled even amongst specialists. One of the key arguments of this chapter is that educationalists (like Piaget back in 1922) have often been aware of the possibilities that psychoanalytic thinking might offer teaching and education studies, but the possibilities have not been allowed fully to develop, or have been forgotten by education.

In addition to these theoretical or research-focused discussions about the use of psychoanalytic ideas in education, there were in the early part of the twentieth century a number of practical experiments in schools and teacher education. In 1919, the progressive educationalist Siegfried Bernfield founded the *Kinderheim Baumgarten* (‘the Orchard Orphanage’) for Polish Jewish Refugee children, drawing on psychoanalytic and socialistic ideas (Ascher, 2006: 281). Later written up as *Kinderheim Baumgarten* (1921), the democratic and psychoanalytically-informed model he established proved influential in a range of places (including in the Israeli kibbutzim). Bernfield went on to undertake a psychoanalytic training, and was in the 1920s secretary to the philosopher of intersubjectivity, Martin Buber (Ascher, 2006: 281). Around the same time as Bernfield’s initiatives were taking root, Anna Freud began her teacher training in 1915 (around her twentieth year), and worked as a

primary teacher until 1920 (Young-Bruehl, 2008: 76–78), including at the Kinderheim Baumgarten (Freud Museum, 2019), until illness forced her to resign her teaching post. Anna Freud was first analysed between 1918 and 1922, during which period she began a psychoanalytic training under the auspices of the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society, beginning her experiments in child analysis in 1923 (Young-Bruehl, 2008: 131 & 140).

Between 1925 and the Nazi annexation of Austria in 1938, the Austrian Psychoanalytic Society ran a ‘Teaching Institute’ which trained both lay psychoanalysts and school teachers (Ascher, 2006: 278):

in a little over a decade, 180 teachers had attended courses related to psychoanalytic paedagogy and approximately 40 teachers had undergone the full training as psychoanalytic paedagogues. (W. Datler, 1993, cited in Ascher, 2006: 292)¹⁹

Those undertaking the teacher training route were also student members of the Psychoanalytic Society, and were in training to become, quite specifically, “psychoanalytic paedagogues” (Ascher, 2006: 278). A core part of this process was to expose beginner teachers to psychoanalysis (to a didactic analysis), so forming and developing them with the experiential learning that emerges from personal therapy: trainee teachers were required to undergo psychoanalysis, generally for “five or six times a week for a relatively short period” (broadly aligned to the model of analysis Piaget undertook), and with a view to averting the risk that, as Anna Freud later put it, “otherwise, children merely serve as more or less suitable material on which to abreact unconscious and unsolved difficulties” (Freud, 1931 (1927): 107).

¹⁹ The original paper is only available in German, as ‘Psychoanalytische Paedagogik in Ursprungsland Oesterreich: Einige Problemsgeschichte Anmerkungen’, *Zeitschrift fuer Paedagogik*, (1993) 32, 446–9.

Anna Freud had by the mid-1920s become a key figure in that Vienna Teaching Institute, taking a leading rôle in its work. Her lectures in 1927 to trainee teachers acknowledged something of the risks and adventure they were involved in, talking of their new “form of ‘wild’ analysis which has borrowed all its expedients from analysis but nowise conforms to strict analytical principles” (Ascher, 2006: 287). She argued that psychoanalysis offered a middle way between authoritarianism and indiscipline (Freud, 1974: 128), and that

psychoanalysis does have three things for it. In the first place, it is well qualified to offer criticism of existing methods. In the second place, as a scientific theory [sic] [and] psychoanalysis extends the educator’s knowledge of the complicated relations between child and adults. Finally, as a method of therapy, the analysis of children endeavours to repair the injuries which have been inflicted upon the child during the process of education. (Freud, 1974: 129)

The previous year (1926), Anna Freud, along with Bernfield (who had become a lecturer at the Teaching Institute) and August Aichorn, had begun a journal of psychoanalytical paedogogy, the *Zeitschrift für Psychoanalytische Pädagogik*, which contained contributions from both psychoanalysts (including, despite their later split, Melanie Klein) and some of the teachers connected to the Teaching Institute.

The analysts contributed articles on a range of psychoanalytic problems they had observed in their work with children: exhibitionism, masturbation, bed wetting, premenstrual moodiness, even suicide. In addition, articles by teachers offered observations and suggestions in the running of what would now be called a more ‘child-centred classroom’. For instance, Lili Roubiczek Peller (1898–1966), who had studied the Montessori method in London and

brought it to Vienna, developed a theory of play for the *Zeitschrift*. (Ascher, 2006: 288).

There was also, from 1927, a small private school (the so-called ‘Matchbox School’) linked to the Teaching Institute, run in the grounds of Eva Rosenfield’s house in the Hietzing district of Vienna, and founded by Anna Freud, Eva Rosenfield and Dorothy Burlingham (de Mijolla, 2005). Its curriculum is reported to have been structured around Dewey’s project-based methods (Midgley, 2008: 35), and the degree to which it was really linked to psychoanalysis has been questioned: indeed, Dorothy Burlingham (a psychoanalyst and later Anna Freud’s partner) subsequently felt the school was “a mistake” (M. J. Burlingham 1986, cited in Ascher, 2006: 290).

The famous (later American) psychologists Erik and Joan Erikson, who taught at the Matchbox School, appear to have been equally unsure of the degree to which the school was a specifically ‘psychoanalytic’ educational endeavour, “other than the fact that observations conducted at the school sometimes provided themes for psychoanalytic training and writings” or that there might be an awareness of the children having “a difficult time” or being in analysis (Erikson, cited in Ascher, 2006: 290). This criticism suggests that ‘psychoanalysis’ for the Eriksons was conceived as a process quite distinct from the normal processes of education (whereas the argument of this thesis is that the psychodynamic aspects of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy operate in normal teaching and learning); for the Eriksons, the Matchbox School didn’t go far enough: a ‘*really*’ psychoanalytic school would have been marked by something more than just an awareness of the children having a ‘difficult time’ or the odd INSET session. However, the Eriksons’ view possibly begs some epistemological questions about where the knowledge-base of psychoanalytic pedagogy might be located, and underestimates the degree to which practices and research processes that the teachers undertook might have

impacted classroom teaching. It also possibly underestimates the extent to which psychoanalytic thinking impacted the habitus of the teachers trained in this manner (and thinking and practising as they did). One example of how the psychoanalytic identity impacted on the teacher's rôle is provided in Erikson's description of a discussion with a group of 12- and 13-year-old pupils about rage. In this example, Erickson's psychoanalytically-informed approach to discussion with the children tolerated complex emotions and allowed the conversation to discover, as he put it, "civilisation and its discontents' in our little progressive school" (cited Midgley, 2008: 34-35). In that example, it seems clear how ideas from psychoanalysis shaped the conduct of the teaching, the theme of the lesson and the objective of the learning.

Other analytically-trained teachers working at this time alongside Bernfield, Aichorn and Freud included Lili Roubiczek; together, they are considered to have "demonstrated the utility of education as a crucible for psychoanalytic activity, and their career paths and writings suggested how practitioners might pursue multiple interests in psychoanalysis" (Weiland, 1994: 343). Aichorn's involvement in education appears to have had what one might describe as a 'reflexive' influence on (Freudian) psychoanalysis: his attention to the impact of the child-parent relationship in the aetiology of delinquency "marked a radical shift for [Freudian] psychoanalysis towards a focus on the whole personality (not just the instinctual impulses) and a recognition of developmental, alongside neurotic, levels of disturbance" (Midgley, 2008: 30), and shows how an inductive method working *with* children can have profound impact on our understanding of theory.

Other experiments looking at the use of psychoanalysis in teaching and schools also began very early in the twentieth century. In New York in 1916, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, Wesley Mitchell (her husband) and Harriet Johnson

founded ‘the Bureau of Educational Experiments’ and associated nursery school; this had the objective of combining “expanding psychological awareness with democratic conceptions of education” with the intention of discovering what kind of environment best suits children’s learning and growth, so as to “create [it] and train adults to maintain it” (Bank Street College, 2019). These experiments later developed first into the “Co-operative School” (founded in 1930), and then later into Bank Street College and its associated school (which continue to operate to this day). The College has succeeded in making space for practitioners of psychoanalytically-informed teaching (such as Clio Stearns and Deborah Britzman’s collaborator, Alice Pitt), even though (based on a review of their outward facing publications) psychoanalysis does not currently appear to be a dominant theme in its approach (Bank Street College, 2019).

Using Psychoanalytic Thought to Understand Schools

In addition to the training of psychoanalytic paedagogues in Austria before the Second World War, and the experiments at Bank Street in New York, there have been a number of now often forgotten sorties from psychoanalytic studies in the terrain of education, in which ideas from the broad psychoanalytic movement have been put to use to help understand the strangeness and messiness of schools (and, indeed, challenge our understanding of what schools are for and how they function). Edward Pajak (2012: 1193) reminds us of Willard Waller’s study of the lives of rural teachers in the US in the 1920s and 1930s, which raised issues of sexuality and desire with a striking clarity and honesty that may surprise contemporary readers:

Waller considered the possibility that the pattern of interplay between children and adults in the classroom was based on sexual instinct, noting that younger teachers sometimes became love objects for students. He also acknowledged that even highly conscientious teachers sometimes experienced peculiar and disquieting stirrings or compulsions toward certain students when unconscious processes came into play:

these teachers find it impossible to take their eyes from the face of a fair student or to preserve the academic standards where she²⁰ is concerned, or to rid themselves, in their off hours, of the thought of her and the sound of her name and the vision of her face.

(Waller, 1932 (1967): 146-147)

In Britain, in 1934, the Girls' Day School Trust recruited Marion Milner to conduct "an educational experiment" (Farley, 2015: 438), which resulted in the publication of her 1938 *The Human Problem in Schools*, a well-received account of the complexity of education, and one that Lisa Farley points out was psychoanalytically-informed, with Milner undergoing a Freudian didactic analysis during the final period of authorship. Milner's project, Farley points out, coincided with events such as Donald Winnicott's lecture on the school as the field for the return of the repressed, and the infant's control of the adults around him (Winnicott, 1936 (1996)). These combined forces – flows of ideas, influences, thinking – resulted in Milner's final report to the Headmistresses of the GDST being only nine pages long, and focusing tightly on anxiety, frustration, the pressure of adult personality, isolation, the pressure to comply with social codes, and the lack of material, creative and artistic outlets. Psychoanalytic thinking was clearly having an impact:

²⁰ Or, I'm sure, 'he'.

through these four themes, Milner began to embrace the very experiences she proposed to clean up in earlier reports: leisure, wandering ideas, feelings that detour from social codes, defiance, creativity and art. (Farley, 2015: 447)

Like other, later, educational researchers, it appears that Marion Milner's encounter with psychoanalysis had created for her something of an 'un-education', an experience of 'after-education', a recognition that (to paraphrase Anna Freud) psychoanalysis affords one the opportunity to undo the damage of schooling.

Clifford Mayes (2009) adds to this history a persuasive account of the scattered but determined presence – in the US context – of a score or so of psychoanalytic paedagogues in educational research and teacher education throughout the twentieth century, including Caroline Zachry (1894–1945), Bruno Bettelheim (1903–1990), Oskar Pfister (1873–1956) and Peter Blos (1903–1997). At the same time, Mayes notes the equally determined resistance of the system to the knowledge that they offer. As Peter Taubman puts it in his thorough (though US-centred) history of the subject, psychoanalysis is for schools and education often *Disavowed Knowledge* (2012). Thus it is that Mayes is able to note that, even into the twenty-first century, writers “still bemoan the fact that in teacher education, it is behaviourism, cognitivism, and humanism that are studied, completely overlooking what psychoanalysis has to offer both the prospective and practising teacher” (Mayes, 2009: 546).

Unpicking ‘the Good Teacher’

It seems likely that part of that resistance is because certain insights from psychoanalytic thinking are challenging for teachers and schools, and trigger certain defences, both collective and personal. In her introductory lectures for teachers back in 1927, Anna Freud made the following, slightly chastening, observation:²¹

I hold we are justified in demanding that teachers should have learned to know and to control their own conflicts before they begin educational work. Otherwise, children merely serve as more or less suitable material on which to abreact unconscious and unsolved difficulties.
(Freud, 1931 (1927): 107)

Her use of the word *abreaction* is instructive: abreaction is a clinical term describing the expression and consequent release of a previously repressed emotion, achieved through *reliving the experience that caused it*. Anna Freud points to the self-evident risk that individuals with unprocessed psychic conflicts are drawn to contexts in which the material is active. This is probably a commonplace feature of everyone’s biography, an archetypal aspect of what it is to be human, and a fact of life which draws all sorts of people to their chosen professions or activities; the problem with teaching, of course, is the inherent involvement of the young and vulnerable in the work, and the risk that they become therapeutic material for their teachers.

This issue has been explored in the research of Philip Reilly, who has used attachment theory to look at teachers in Australia. Attachment theory (as noted in Chapter 2) emerges from John Bowlby’s pioneering work at the intersection of psychoanalytic thinking (drawing on object-relations theory)

²¹ Cited in passing, above.

behavioural psychology and ethology, and was first presented in his *Attachment and Loss* trilogy (Bowlby, 1969; 1972; 1980); a Jungian/post-Jungian theoretical perspective on attachment theory was articulated by Jean Knox in her *Attachment, Archetype, Analysis* (Knox, 2003)²².

Riley reminds us that teachers will have their own attachment ‘inner working models’ derived from early childhood, and these are active all the time, developing through their careers. Based in Australia, he has undertaken a range of work looking at teachers’ internal working models of attachment, and the implications for these for the education system. One of his studies, based on survey work with 750 teachers, reports that less experienced teachers experience marked attachment insecurity, and that this diminishes over length of teaching service:

one explanation for this finding is that teachers are receiving a corrective emotional experience from their work relationships. [...] If an unconscious need to gain and give affection influences initial motivation to teach, the career choice might be considered a search for a corrective emotional experience (CEE) – at least for some teachers. (Riley, 2012: 2-3)

That is to say, school *is indeed* a form of abreactive therapy for teachers: precisely the risk that Anna Freud articulated nearly a century ago.

This presents significant implications for teachers and teacher educators, assuming that Riley’s research is applicable to other contexts:

1. significant numbers of teachers operate with “a largely unconscious attachment mechanism”, which “either changes in teachers

²² Dr Knox assisted with part of my didactic analysis as part of this project.

as a result of their classroom experience or predicts early exit from the profession” (Riley, 2012: 12);

2. “if initial motivation to teach is predicted by an insecure attachment style, these teachers are vulnerable to student rejection” (Riley, 2012: 1);

3. “if a vulnerability to student rejection exists” then “these people would be more likely to react inappropriately when it occurs” (Riley, 2012: 11);

4. “adding psycho-education to pre-service courses would produce more resilience in teachers entering classrooms for the first time” (Riley, 2012: 1) (and, by implication, empower serving teachers to understand their own motivations and their interrelationship with the subjectivities of their pupils).

Riley concludes his 2012 article by calling for more qualitative research (p. 11) and suggesting that education and educationalists need to work together to construct a common language to allow teachers to explore the professional implications of this material (p. 13).

Attachment

Following Shaver and Mikulincer (2002), while acknowledging the tensions that Gullestad notes between attachment theory and psychoanalysis (2001), I have already suggested that we can also think of attachment, with its roots in object relations dynamics, as a psychodynamic phenomenon. It seems fair to argue also that attachment theory, given its focus on how children bond with

the adults responsible for them, has obvious applications in schools and teaching. Heather Geddes' 2006 *Attachment in the Classroom* (noted in Chapter 2) not only provides a good introduction to the complex history of this area of psychology, but also shows how attachment theory can be put to good use for understanding difficult behaviours in primary classrooms.

The connections between attachment theory and object relations (and thus the wider psychodynamic approach) become very clear when clinical case-studies are examined. Geddes' book, for example, includes a story about a thirteen-year-old boy whose behaviour in school was improved by understanding how food and weaning was an area of troubled emotions for him and his mother (and in school, the nurture and nourishment of learning came to replicate these early problematic developmental and relational experiences):

Stan was very overweight and his mother appeared to have no control over his constant eating; he helped himself from the fridge kept stocked by his mother. Their eating habits seemed to be connected to hostility that was kept at bay by her constant anticipation and gratification of his needs [...] The outcome of the assessment was to recognise the nature of Stan's relationship with his mother and the implications of this for learning. They appeared to be very close, forming a sub-group within the family. Stan exerted considerable control over his mother and could, he said, "get anything he wanted". She seemed to welcome their intimacy as 'special' and, despite what teachers at school had been saying, persisted in seeing him as a boy who was struggling to learn but was misunderstood. She did not seem able to see her son as anything but the boy she wanted him to be. This privileged relationship was hard for Stan to give up in order to learn from the teachers at school. (Geddes, 2006: 32-33)

This is psychodynamic material: an attachment issue (by definition, from the home life) became transferred into the classroom, and its unconscious repetition impeded learning.

As Geddes, Riley and others have argued, attachment is simply part of the classroom. In addition to the point about what one might call the pathological aspects of teacher motivation (noted above), one of Riley's key arguments is that teachers are often transitional parents, or what he calls "allo" attachment figures (a term derived from the accepted ethological expression 'allomothering', the process whereby other adults of a species act as substitute parents for young that are not their own). These 'allo' attachment figures bridge the move from childhood inner working models to adult, romantic, attachments (Riley, 2012: 1). We can clearly see here an intersection between thinking about alloparenting as an attachment function, and recognising the degree to which pupils will – at an archetypal level – use teachers as objects within their own developmental psychodramas.

As noted above, Riley concludes his 2012 article with a request that teachers, psychologists and school leaders need to create together "a common language for discussing many of the emotional aspects of the school experience" (p. 13). One suggestion that this thesis offers is that the idea of the 'psychodynamic', and the 'psychodynamic incident in teaching and learning' affords the possibility of creating exactly that shared vocabulary, through a focus not on what divides elements of the psychoanalytic movement, but what unites (and on what can be understood in school). Psychodynamic vocabulary is language that is used by different branches of the psychoanalytic movement, and which names things that are experience-near to the teachers who need to understand the material and deal with it in their classrooms.

Teachers Who Use Psychoanalytic Ideas in their Writing About their Own Teaching

It will be clear from the summary above that there is a long history both of psychoanalytic thinkers writing about schools, and of educationalists making use of psychoanalytic ideas to understand schools or education. The reality for many teachers in schools, however, is that these ideas are not widely recognised or put to use at the moment. If one accepts the fact that psychodynamic phenomena are active in schools and the relationships between teachers and their pupils, it is nonetheless true that these phenomena normally operate outside of any formal supervision or containment structures, and that material is activated, but often unconsciously.

Notwithstanding the significant academic literature outlined above, there appears to be only a handful of teachers currently engaged in writing about their own teaching, and how psychodynamic factors are at play in their classrooms: Hannu Tuisku (writing about teaching drama in Finland), Toby Garfath, Andrew Murray, Jane Sander and Paula Conway (writing about English classrooms); Clio Stearns, Heather Sykes and Jillian Pasioka (with David Lewkowich), writing in the US. I should also acknowledge Herbert Kohl and Deborah Britzman. Edward Pajak describes Herbert Kohl's book, *36 Children* (1968), as an extended study of Kohl's "highly tentative, self-critical, and interpersonal classroom style that strives at all times to discover and create meaning in the supremely human act of teaching" (2011: 2038). Britzman used her own teaching experiences to explore the manner in which the defensive structures of melancholia suffuse education, in her 2006 essay 'Monsters in Literature' (Britzman, 2006) – her only sortie into autobiographical material (Farley, 2014: 128).

Hannu Tuisku works as a drama teacher in Finland. In his 2010 article, (Tuisku, 2010) he draws on Stanislavski and the notion of the ‘psychophysical’, to explore how the physicality of certain drama practices in secondary education can, through the embodiment of imagined possibilities, represent a Winnicottian transitional *process* (analogous to the use of transitional objects in earlier childhood crises of development and re-engineering of internal objects and attachments). Drawing on the metaphor of “Diving In” (the title of the article), Tuisku explores the physical and embodied nature of actor training and performance (p. 3) and how the transitional space of the imagination affords possibilities for young actors to experiment, explore and understand emerging realities.

The paedagogical situation seems to create space for transition: there are fleeting moments of transitional space, where moving towards new areas of self is possible. In the centre there is the transformation, and since the work is collective, shared, the group changes as a group. [...] This process is about physical work, dominated by its democratic nature, and characterized by non-linguistic processes, and fiction. (Tuisku, 2010: 26)

Citing Bruce Burton, Tuisku suggests that youth theatre can thus offer a sort of ‘rite of passage’ for young people in industrial and post-industrial societies, noting “theatre’s resemblance to rites” (Tuisku, 2010: 4). It seems to me as if a connection to Jungian psychological ideas appears to have been missed: Analytical Psychology has a rich literature exploring the shamanistic qualities of personal development (Downton, 1989) and the archetypal qualities of ritual in psychological healing (Groesbeck, 1989), such ‘spiritual’ aspects of the Jungian psychology overlap both with this idea of performance, and with Stanislavsky’s attention to the “spiritual content” of acting (Merlin, 2014: 47).

In a point that connects with a broader methodological theme that runs through this work, Tuisku argues that the change that is created in these young actors is experiential, not just intellectual or cognitive. Acknowledging the influence of Stanislavski, Tuisku argues that in psychophysical actor training, some sort of emotional reality becomes embodied (p. 6), representing a rupture with the academic tradition: psychophysical learning – what might be described as a ‘experiential learning’ in psychoanalytic circles or psycho-social studies – is a different form of knowledge to academic knowledge, or that which is traditionally valued in universities or Cartesian thinking.

Toby Garfath was a master’s student at London’s UCL Institute of Education, when he selected the module ‘Psychosocial Approaches to Learning’; his coursework became the article ‘Gambling with nonsense’, in which he uses Donald Winnicott’s ideas about play to understand what might really be going on in his secondary English classroom (Garfath, 2015). His writing looks back on his first two years or so as a teacher, and uses psychoanalytic ideas to re-think what the fundamentals of teaching might be. He comes to realise that the off-task behaviour of the classroom (often intolerable in most ways of thinking about teaching and learning) has a psychic, developmental function, in which he is a key agent:

as I attempted to make their negative feelings – in psychoanalytic terms, their expression of hate – an accepted part of the dialogue of the lesson, their playful acts of hatred – the moving of the chairs, for example – seemed less and less important to them. (Garfath, 2015: 120)

David Lewkowich and Jillian Pasioka co-authored a short article exploring desire and dreaming (Lewkowich and Pasioka, 2017). Lewkowich’s approach here develops aspects of his writing with beginner teachers about dreaming, desire and narrative form (Lewkowich, 2016). Pasioka’s contribution was a

short story about a group of pupils “who become progressively more beaten up, and whose teacher is unable to see their bruises, as they embark on the precarious task of expressing their dreaming, creative selves” (p. 24). The metaphor is clear, and Pasięka’s writing affords an extended reflection authored by Lewkowich about error, desire and mutuality in the classroom, informed by the insights of the long psychoanalytic tradition. It also offers an example of the kind of co-authorship that I experiment with later in this thesis – though our model, of blending the voices of the authors, is different to Lewkowich and Pasięka’s macaronic approach.

Clio Stearns has written several articles about her work as an elementary teacher working in several different settings within the state of New York (Stearns, 2013a; Stearns, 2013b; Stearns, 2015). She has used psychoanalytic ideas to understand resistance and literacy in a middle-school setting (with a brief linkage to her own experiences as a mother (2013a)). Though being a mother informs how she relates to her pupils, she recognises the complexities and anxieties that arise, that the ‘flip-side’ of the relational is the risk that you might not have ‘enough’: “I began to fear that becoming a mother had taken the teacher out of me, that I did not have that ephemeral ‘enough to go around’” (Stearns, 2013a: 9).

Stearns’ narrative approach (not quite autoethnography, but very similar in form to it) has generated some strikingly powerful and insightful writing about her teaching. Her work with ‘Alice’ (Stearns, 2013b: 73), and with a small group of older primary children resistant to reading (Stearns, 2013a: 13) celebrates the extent to which the relational is at the core of what happens between teacher and pupil. Stearns draws copiously and freely on her own biography and her counter-transference experiences to explore the interrelationships between her subjectivity as a lesbian mother, and teacher, and her rôle as the object of her pupils’ desires (a theme I explore below).

This leads her to explore the degree to which loss is tangled up in the very roots of literacy itself (Stearns, 2013a: 21).

One of Stearns' key arguments relates to another broader theme that emerges from the literature, namely how education systems operate as complex and unconscious defensive structures, serving to protect those working within them from psychic pain. For Stearns, the process of psychoanalytic inquiry acknowledges that pain, and allows, among other things, for a certain mourning for a lost idea:

mourning a theoretical, idealized person who isn't plays an essential part in knowing, teaching, and learning from the flawed but real person who is. Reflecting about my version of this mourning process helps me respect it in my students, giving me insight into helping them work through loss. (Stearns, 2013b: 72)

This approach, Stearns acknowledges, is not the norm, but the failure to create these spaces for teachers has consequences. "Teachers need permission and encouragement to think about these feelings if we are to prevent our students from becoming lost" (Stearns, 2013b: 74), because "when school fails to provide teachers with space to consider our counter-transference – our desires from our students, our feelings about them and about childhood – diagnostic labels gain appeal" (p. 75).

Andrew Murray was working as a teacher of Religious Education in northern England when he undertook a master's degree course in psychoanalytic observation (one which included an infant observation). The results of this were published in a 2016 article titled 'Psychoanalytically Informed Teachers: the Need for Observational Training in Education'. Murray's account is a rich – and at times painfully honest – account of his own counter-transference phenomena, his love/hate relationships with some classes, and how these

forces affected his classroom practice. For Murray, “the teacher treads a fine line between emotional connection and identifying with the destructive emotions of the students” (2016: 299). He recognises the messiness around the transference/counter-transference process:

I play my part in the superego of the students: for some students, I represent the containing boundary within which they can explore primal feelings of loss and helplessness in a safe and comfortable way; for others, I represent the quasi-parental figure who must be lashed out at, and perhaps even the absent male figure missing from many of their lives, and all of the complex emotions that accompany my “once-a-week” visit to their world. (Murray, 2016: 301)

Murray no longer works as a teacher.²³ It could be that his experience of being ‘extruded’ reflects Isobel Menzies Lyth’s (Menzies Lyth, 1990 (1959): 458) comments in her pioneering psychoanalytic study of the caring professions, that people get excluded from organisations and processes when their defence mechanisms don’t match those that are hegemonic. Andrew Murray wrote the following for me to preface his article which I wanted to share with the beginner teachers I work with (but whom I was anxious to protect from the impression that developing psychoanalytic understanding about the nature of teaching would make it impossible to persist as a teacher):

While I find it hard to imagine ever returning to the classroom on a full-time basis any time soon, I would like to imagine that there will be (has to be?) some kind of shift in education which not only has realistic expectations around workload and trusts teachers to use their own unique skills and experience for the communities they serve, but also creates an environment where psychodynamic perspectives on the

²³ He and I met on 9 November 2018.

experience of teaching and learning are valued, and where the lived experience of the classroom, staffroom, playground and parents' evening might be considered raw data.²⁴

Writing for the Development Education Association about global education, Jane Sander and Paula Conway (Sander and Conway, 2013) describe their work in the Kent-based social enterprise, Commonwork. They are explicitly psychodynamic. They explore how a psychodynamic approach to environmental education has led them to conclude that complex and challenging issues which can trigger anxiety (such as education about climate change) can only be approached if a number of what they term "conditions" are met in the school environment:

positive and loving experiences of nature and supposed 'out-groups' [...] cohesiveness between home and school [and the acknowledgement] that children need to be taught potentially frightening ideas in a supportive community setting. (Sander and Conway, 2013: 5)

Their work has led them to ask "a huge range of challenging questions":

How can emotional experiences be valued within a school? How can teachers be best supported to manage their own anxieties so they can contain the anxieties of the children they work with? Should we offer teacher development opportunities that work with the whole-school culture, whatever it is, or support 'positive deviants' [...]? (Sander and Conway, 2013: 5)

Questions, they acknowledge, that are complex and challenge their own practice "at every level", because (in an analysis which acknowledges that

²⁴ Andrew Murray, 2018; note in a Virtual Learning Environment.

political aspect of psychoanalytic paedology that takes us right back to the Matchbox School in Red Vienna),

to effect change in perception, attitudes, feelings and behaviours requires providing real life positive experiences for children in a supportive culture that is not paranoid, over anxious or massively defended against reality. This is the culture we need to create in schools and in the wider community to enable any sustained action to be taken at a community, school and individual level. It is only with thoughtful containing environmental support that ‘depressive guilt’ about real and potential damage done can lead to reparative action in adults and children. (Sander and Conway, 2013: 5)

Tamara Bibby has looked at how particular psychoanalytic theories might be used to understand classrooms and how they work. Her *Education: An impossible profession?* (2010) applied, in turn, Lacan, Winnicott, Foulkes, Freud, Bion and Klein to analyse ethnographic data based on a year’s worth of observation in a primary school in London: much of the data is striking about how teachers in the school in question failed to imagine the emotional worlds of the children they taught. In a 2009 article, she contrasted interview data from a focus group of primary pupils (which she conducted) and one of secondary pupils (conducted by one of their teachers); both groups were discussing mathematics lessons. She explored not only what the pupils said about maths, but *how* they talked about teaching and learning, and how their approach to what learning is contrasted starkly with that of the teacher in the research project. Whilst the interviewing teacher repeatedly tried to get the children to talk about ‘maths’, the children returned time and time again to the personal qualities of the teachers, about whether or not they were sensitive, responsive, or capable of responding to the children’s fears and anxieties. For the children, the academic subject and the teacher who taught

it are conflated, notwithstanding the interviewing teacher's "unwillingness or inability to stay with the intersubjectivities that the pupils kept returning to" (Bibby, 2009: 45):

In all the interviews, the pupils spoke to her as a colleague, while she listened as a teacher. And yet the pupils were remarkably persistent in their efforts to get her to hear what they wanted to tell her: about their learning and their relationship with their teacher who was part of that learning and knowing. (Bibby, 2009: 45)

For Bibby, a psychoanalytically-informed approach to teaching is part of a wider critique of the "technical-rationalist dream of a knowable, measurable, controllable approach to teaching and learning [that] seems to be unravelling" (Bibby, 2009: 41); knowledge and subjective experience are inseparable, "the unconscious conditions of all belief systems, and the presence of fantasies which are always in on the act of making knowledge" (Pitt, Robertson, and Todd 1998: 4, cited in Bibby, 2009: 43). Drawing on Bion's contributions to object relations theory (and the contention that relationships are the very foundations of knowledge, thinking and speech), Bibby argues for the centrality of Love, Hate and Knowledge (which Bion coded as 'L', 'H' and 'K') to the teaching and learning process (Bibby, 2009: 43). Extending these ideas further, Bibby argues, along with Bion and citing the Symingtons,²⁵ that just as Love, Hate and Knowledge further learning, blocks to these emotions represent "a refusal to engage, a repression", if the negations of these emotions exist, then "the process of understanding within the relationship is stopped and reversed; meaningful experience may be destroyed" (Bibby, 2009: 44).

Her data argue persuasively that pupils are able to distinguish between teachers who can listen in a psychodynamic sense, and those who cannot;

²⁵ Symington and Symington, 1996 (2004): 29.

between a teacher who “feels a need to exert a tight and highly restrictive form of control; and a teacher who can provide the psychic and emotional space for them to explore explanations”, and that, furthermore, this emotional frame (what Bibby calls “control of a particular kind”) is “an important prerequisite for enabling them to learn” (Bibby, 2009: 47). An ‘expert teacher’ is thus an “‘emotionally expert’ or perhaps ‘socially expert’” practitioner who can “handle them, and his relationships with them, confidently” (Bibby, 2009: 47).

In this way, a classroom centred on maintaining constructive relationships would be one where love (and the blocks to love), hate (and the denial of hate), and knowledge (and the evasion of knowledge) would be managed by teacher and pupils working “together to hold the anxiety and difficulty of coming to know” in a mutuality marked by “the emotional flows associated with an ability to tolerate thoughts, think and to learn” (Bibby, 2009: 47). What has to be guarded against is “refused or blocked relationships”, which are part of what Bion termed -K (‘minus K’), the resistance to knowledge (Bibby, 2009: 48).

Transference in Schools

A definition of transference was supplied in Chapter 2 (pp. 57-65). It might here assist the reader by offering a summary definition that transference and counter-transference can be thought of as those psychological processes in which feelings and thoughts are displaced from one place or person to another. Transference is simply a fact of life in schools, but often one not widely recognised or acknowledged. In schools, it often occurs that affective

material from past relationships is transferred into current interactions: a child's father walks out of the home – that child now feels resentful to all men in authority, including his hardworking and mystified male teacher. Similarly, counter-transferences can easily be at play – should that hard-working and mystified teacher have had a tricky relationship with his own father, he might feel overwhelmed when having to cope with the acting-out of a fatherless child. As John Tieman notes (describing the aetiology of a different sort of negative counter-transference),

the educator, who cannot remember the source of his/her feelings of shame, may well choose to visit his/her own wounds upon the student. (Tieman, 2007: 51)

Or, in Stephen Weiss' words,

past interpersonal experiences form a template that shapes and may distort teachers' views of present situations. Teachers are often unaware of their personal subjective involvement in what they consider to be objective professional decisions about children. (Weiss, 2002b: 112)

That first quality of the transference (as the process through which material from earlier life experiences comes into play in current relationships) is easily understood by teachers, because they recognise how a child having a bad time at home might 'act up' in school; the *therapeutic* quality of the transference seems harder for the system to acknowledge. What also might be resisted is the prospect of using this material in conscious interactions with children and young people. One area of my interest is the extent to which the 'emotional contagion' may also be a key part – or just a part – of a teacher's work, because of the need for the teacher to be attuned to the internal movements in the psyches of their learners. As Stephen Weiss puts it,

therapists are subject to the same types of transference reactions as their clients. So are teachers. (Weiss, 2002a: 15)

Weiss goes on to describe how consultancy using a psychodynamic approach was needed to help teachers understand what happens in their classroom – that is to say, bring to at least partial consciousness what remains unconscious until it is given proper consideration (Weiss, 2002b).

Something of this sort – though viewed through a different but nonetheless psychoanalytic theoretical framework – is captured in Joseph Mintz's description of an incident when teaching 'Avi', around an activity in which Year 3 children (7-8 years old) were tasked with making dreidels, a spinning die toy associated with the Jewish festival of Hannukah:

Two classes together were given a time to work in the hall on making dreidels and to practise spinning them. During our time in the hall, most of the children were getting on fine with their dreidels, but Avi was finding it hard. I can't remember the precise problem he was having – it might have been getting his dreidel to spin properly. He was quite frustrated by this and starting to get upset. I do remember quite strongly noticing this from across the room and coming to work with him. I made some suggestions as to what he might do. He looked up at me, but didn't take any notice of what I had said, and carried on not managing the task. I remember having a strong feeling, and it was more of a feeling than a precise thought, that what he needed was just for me to be there with him and not necessarily to say anything. I also remember that it was quite an effort to concentrate on him – the hall was very noisy and there was lots of movement from excited children and spinning dreidels. But I managed to do just that, crouching down near him, watching him use the dreidel. On the surface he didn't seem

obviously to react to me in any particularly strong way, although he glanced momentarily up at me every so often. But I had a strong sense of communicating with him in some way, of being alert to what he needed, and of it being somehow important for me to be there and alert with him, even though I didn't have anything specific to say or do. He just carried on playing with the dreidel, noticeably more calmly now, glancing up at me every so often. (Mintz, 2014: 6)

In analysing this interaction, Mintz uses Wilfred Bion's theory of intersubjective thinking (broadly in the object-relations school), and Bion's conception of a transcendent other, which Bion names 'O'. In the idea of 'O', Bion (coming from a Freudian tradition) names something very similar to Jung's idea of the transcendent function.²⁶ Mintz' work goes on to exploit Bion's ideas about the relationship between feeling and thinking, between the un-thought thought and the word to describe those moments in teaching and learning when teachers intuit the idea that the child has not yet grasped.

Lots of teachers will be familiar with this phenomenon, of an idea coming to mind in the moment of teaching it with the very child or pupils who are simultaneously constructing the same thought or 'un-named thought-feeling'. Consider this example taken from the methodology chapter of one of the teachers I work with on the Master of Teaching degree:

Another student in Year 10 asked me when the focus group would take place. I had thought that it would be at lunchtime. However, before I even answered, I realised that what I said would make a difference as to whether he would volunteer for it or not. I asked him if it would do this and he said yes. I thought straight away that he was right: having the group outside of lessons would not really be fair because students would

²⁶ See above, pp. 44-48, for a definition of Jung's idea of the transcendent function.

be giving up their free time so I made an instant decision to say it would be in lesson/s. Soon after, I wondered if I'd made a mistake. Perhaps I should have made it clear in the invitation that the focus group would occur during a lunchtime. (Thomas, 2018)²⁷

There is a connection to be made here, also, with Michael Fordham's ideas of the processes of 'deintegration' and 'reintegration', which attempt to label the inter-subjective blurring of boundaries between infant and (usually) mother: in moments of deintegration, the edges between infant and mother become a little blurry, allowing both to change in some way and take on a bit of the other; then, both step back from this process of mixing and reintegrate, redefining their own boundaries in the process (Fordham, 1967). This has resonances with the way that Piaget characterises learning, as one in which the subject absorbs new knowledge – assimilating it – and in that process bends pre-existing descriptions of the world to fit new experiences – accommodating ego-centred knowledge to the elements of the brave, new world that is discovered (Moore, 2000: 6-8).

'Transference', in the clinical sense, therefore, is only one aspect of what Jungians might call 'archetypal' inter-subjective processes, something that simply happens as part of life, when individuals meet – so why should it surprise us that it is at play in education? It is there, along with a whole range of other 'clinical' phenomena. But, to borrow from a quotation Jung hung near the door to his consulting room,²⁸ 'to what purpose, and to what effect?'. As Clio Stearns notes, quoting Bertram Cohler and Robert Galatzer-Levy (2006: 254):

²⁷ Used with permission.

²⁸ The quotation was 'Vocatus atque non vocatus, Deus aderit', 'bidden or unbidden, God will be present', which is extracted from an ancient text which reportedly went on to ask 'but to what purpose and what effect?'

Transference and counter-transference are everywhere in teaching and learning and in fact are often at the heart of the student's desire to engage and learn ... It makes sense for educators to become as aware as they can of these powerful forces in the classroom; without explicit awareness of counter-transference, educators, like analysts, may find themselves repeating rather than dealing with central emotional issues in the classroom. (Stearns, 2013b: 73)

Whether that transference/counter-transferences proves to be positive or negative (or whether we can tell the difference) is thus one question to ask, but it seems clear that a particular quality of transference is enabled as soon as there is an alliance between the two people involved in the process of change, as soon as there is a mutual commitment and relationship that is at the core of any effective process of change. To borrow from Shedler's exploration of the effectiveness of psychodynamic psychotherapy (Shedler, 2010), just as the 'therapeutic alliance' is central to effective clinical practice, so the 'learning alliance' may lie at the core of what happens in education, and the effectiveness of this alliance implies the activation of transference/counter-transference and other archetypal inter-subjective processes.

Even though it might be possible to convince the leaders of the profession and teacher educators that transference is central to what happens in teaching, Weiss argues that this is not reflected in the design of teacher education programmes, which tend to place a priority on content and behavioural approaches to classroom management (Weiss, 2002b: 113).

Finally, to conclude this subsection, I note that the literature review brought up two examples of teacher educators who had used reading groups to generate material about transference, fantasy or desire: Lewkowich (2014)²⁹

²⁹ Already mentioned, above.

and Janzen (2014b); Janzen (2014a). Neither of these research projects used the teachers as ‘interpretative participants’ (as one might in a psychoanalytic experiential group); rather, the teachers were used to create data that was interpreted later by the academic author (in this case, the teacher educator). My point here relates to the methodological justification for co-authorship used in Part II: Lewkowich and Janzen’s methods create the knowledge about the transference *outside* the group, even though it seems likely that the group might have benefited from engaging with those ideas, and also that some sort of mutuality in the research process would have impacted positively on the data constructed.

Jungian Writing on Education

There is a markedly smaller group of writers who use Jungian ideas to explore education. Clifford Mayes is a Jungian ‘traditionalist’, and applies a ‘classical Jungian’ archetype psychology to education with texts such as *Jung and Education: Elements of an Archetypal Paedagogy* (2005). It will be obvious from other elements of this thesis that, because of the particular reliance on the contested idea of the collective unconscious which underpins the ‘traditionalist’ use of the idea of archetypes, such an approach is controversial within even analytical psychology. In contrast, Inna Semetsky and her colleagues adopt a playful, holistic and broadly ‘post-Jungian’ approach (*Jung and Educational Theory* (Semetsky, 2013a)). Her collection of essays thus brings together a range of writers working in the field of the philosophy of education whose “inclusive attitude” allowed them “to discover a largely untapped area, the dimension of *education* spread through Jung’s vast body of works” (p. viii). This allowed for a return to the language of “soul” in

education and the rôle of healing (Rowland, 2013), “the Polytheistic Classroom” (Neville, 2013), the applicability of the Jungian idea of the transcendent function to contemporary philosophical approaches (Semetsky and Ramey, 2013), and even the use of Tarot as a tool in “education and teaching” (Semetsky, 2013b). I trust that these examples will serve to illustrate that Jung’s writing is as rich and as productive as Freud’s, and – as Semetsky points out – largely untapped.

Conclusion

I set out in this chapter to show how ideas from the wider psychoanalytic movement have, over the last century and a quarter, impacted on the actual world of teaching and education, and yet so often now seem resisted, forgotten or disavowed. In doing so, I have focused on the psychodynamic phenomena of resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, the therapeutic alliance, fantasy, and the impact of the unconscious itself.

The chapter has looked at how each of those psychodynamic phenomena has at some time been written about in the context of schools or education: there were Anna Freud’s reflections a century ago; Clio Stearns’ writing about grade-school resistance to learning; Commonwork’s consideration of children’s defences against anxiety in the context of global warming; Philip Riley’s research into beginner teachers’ conflicts and how they are transferred into their careers; Tamara Bibby’s investigations into object-relations in the classroom; Philip Riley and Pam Geddes’ observations about attachment; and Stephen Weiss, John Tiemann and Joe Mintz on transference/counter-

transference in the classroom. And in the writing of all of these teachers and educationalists the relational is central: in Andrew Murray's scrupulous examination of his counter-transference material, in Toby Garfath's playfulness, in Hannu Tuisku's exploration of the therapeutic, transformational affordances of drama, and in Edward Pajak and Herbert Kohl's assertion of the humanity of the teacher and their relationships with their pupils in the face of systems that operate in a near pathological way.

This focus on the psychodynamic aspects of teaching is justified not only by a Jungian/post-Jungian theoretical position which is open to psychodynamic ideas from other analytic traditions, but also because the actualities of teachers' lives: whilst metapsychological theory is of little direct relevance to teaching situations, psychodynamic phenomena are real, active and an everyday experience in classrooms. So, by deploying the idea of the psychodynamic to understand teaching and learning, I to hope to show how it is possible to bracket off theoretical debates within the wider psychoanalytic movement (the meta-psychology) and focus instead on those aspects of depth psychology (the psychodynamic) that are active in teachers' lives and 'experience-near'. Teachers do not have a clinical training – they are not tied to a particular meta-psychological theory (they may not even be interested in it) but their experience *is inherently psychodynamic*, because of what happens in normal day-to-day teaching.

This concludes the literature review, consisting of a summary of the relevant elements of psychoanalytic and Jungian theory (presented in Chapter 2), and the survey in this Chapter 3 of how these ideas have played out in education and schools. The next chapter, Chapter 4, presents the general methodological issues that confronted the project (as well as a survey of relevant debates in the field of psycho-social studies, reviewed in the light of issues that emerged in the research). Chapter 4 is thus the concluding

element in Part I which positions the research. Part II (Chapters 5 & 6) and Part III (Chapters 7, 8 and 9) will present the primary data that was constructed during the project; these are each accompanied by specific methodological chapters for the co-authorship data (in Chapter 5, Part II) and the autoethnographic data (in Chapter 7, Part III).

Chapter 4

Methodology and Ethics

Introduction

This chapter looks at some of the broader methodological and ethical questions that arose during the research project, namely issues associated with qualitative research in general, and the psycho-social aspects of the inquiry in particular; it forms the concluding element in Part I. This discussion of certain over-arching methodological issues precedes the specific exploration of the two different data construction methods adopted (co-authorship and autoethnography) presented in Part II: Chapter 5 discusses the methodological issues surrounding co-authorship (introducing the co-authored data presented and analysed in Chapter 6) and Chapter 7 defends the use of autoethnography (with that chapter immediately preceding the autoethnographic material presented and analysed in Chapters 8 and 9).

This Chapter 4 thus presents the broader methodological justification of the qualitative research methods used during the project, and locates the thesis within psycho-social studies – specifically, psycho-social approaches to education; ethical and methodological issues *specific* to the two contrasting methods adopted are addressed in two separate chapters (Chapter 5 and Chapter 7), each preceding the primary data presented (in Chapters 6 and 8, respectively).

The discussion of broader methodological issues here provides an opportunity to survey relevant debates in the field of psycho-social studies, which are explored in the light of issues that emerged in the research (including a review of the debate in research methodology between the psychoanalytic and the research interview). This chapter includes a discussion of the relevance of critical realist theory to the ontological and epistemological issues surrounding the sort of qualitative data explored in a thesis of this kind. It also outlines the extensive experiential (and pre-clinical) learning that was undertaken as part of the research project.

Psycho-social Studies, Ontological Issues and What Can be Learnt from Critical Realism

This study is located within both education and psycho-social studies, the latter being regarded as a relatively new field, but with some evidence that the idea is almost as old as psychoanalysis itself. According to Sasha Roseneil, past chair of the Psychosocial Studies Association, the first mention of the term ‘psychosocial’ (with or without the hyphen) was in 1909 report of the Secretary of the American Psychological Association; after that, there were isolated uses in the US *Teachers’ College Record* in 1949, *Acta Paediatrica* in 1952, and the *Journal* of the US National Medical Association in 1952. A Center for Psychosocial Studies was established in the US in 1973 (only to change its name in 1986 to the Center for Transcultural Studies), but the term “really takes off in the 1990s” (Roseneil, 2014: 118-19). The University of East London has had a psycho-social studies department from the mid-1980s (Frosh, 2003: 1548), and the UK’s Psychosocial Studies Network has organised “annual conferences at the major university bases for Psychosocial

Studies since 2008”, with that Network becoming the Association for Psychosocial Studies in 2013, an official ‘learned association’, recognised by the British Academy (Association for Psychosocial Studies, 2021).

The territory that psycho-social studies now occupies appears to have been defined as a result of an intellectual ‘pincer movement’ in the late 1980s and early 1990s: academic psychologists frustrated with the ‘splitting off’ of methods derived from psychoanalysis (Kvale, 1999: 91) or critical of the scientific position of psychology or its relationship with the military (Frosh, 2003: 1546) met social scientists interested in finding new ways to create and analyse data (as exemplified by Berg and Smith’s *The Self in Social Inquiry* (1988)). The two groups coalesced on hybrid, inter-disciplinary, trans-disciplinary ground.

What exactly psycho-social (or psychosocial) studies are has been subject to debate. This is partly muddled by the fact that the term has currency in a range of contexts and is thus not consistently used to mark the inter-disciplinary, boundary-challenging interests of current writers in psycho-social studies – “quite often [...] the term ‘psychosocial’ is used to refer to relatively conventional articles dealing with social adjustment or interpersonal relations, for example” (Frosh, 2003: 1547); outside social sciences, indeed, the term is used in medicine in a general way to signify aspects of a condition that are not organic (and not the sort of methodological innovation implied by social researchers when using the term).

Writing in 2014, Stephen Frosh offered the following definition of the field:

Psychosocial Studies seeks to investigate the ways in which psychic and social processes demand to be understood as always implicated in each other, as mutually constitutive, co-produced, or abstracted levels of a single dialectical process. As such it can be understood as an

interdisciplinary field in search of transdisciplinary objects of knowledge. Psychosocial Studies is also distinguished by its emphasis on affect, the irrational and unconscious processes, often, but not necessarily, understood psychoanalytically. (Frosh, 2014: 161)

This reflects Frosh's earlier 'manifesto-like' articulation of psycho-social studies, in which he argued that the field should be "pluralistic", "acknowledging the partial nature of all claims to knowledge" and noting that "focusing on language leads to the neglect of other significant psychological, social or historical modalities, such as spirituality or trauma" (Frosh, 2003: 1558).

That welcome and explicit acknowledgement in 2014 by one of the leading personalities in the field that psycho-social studies is both 'interdisciplinary' and 'transdisciplinary' represents a reprise of his 2003 defence of attention to other modalities (including the recognition of a legitimate space for 'spirituality' and a caution over 'focusing on language'), but has to be read in the context of a methodological debate that ran in the late-2000s. In contrast to this more recent recognition of the boundary-violating nature of psycho-social studies, in 2008 Stephen Frosh and Lisa Baraitser authored a provocative intervention which appeared to attempt to *define* a boundary, apparently attempting to mark some psychoanalytically-informed approaches to social research as outside the emerging field of psycho-social studies. Their targets included Kleinian-influenced research practices, and "the loose and sometimes pious way in which psychoanalysis has been theorized within psychosocial studies" (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008: 346). With the objective of offering "a critique of psychoanalytic certainty – of the type of reading of psychoanalysis that sees it as harbouring the deep truths of human nature" – they argued for a "broader concept of reflexivity" which would afford a contribution from psychoanalysis that "might usefully become more tentative and disruptive than

has so far been the case” (p. 346). In so doing, they intervened in what they describe (in a slightly unsatisfactory metaphor) as a “stand-off between Kleinian and Lacanian thinkers that, in terms of influence (on students and researchers), looks as if it is being won by the former” (p. 347).³⁰ Advocating a particular reading of what psycho-social studies might be, Frosh and Baraitser took the Lacanian side, appearing to make the case quite forcefully against any use in psycho-social studies of those psychoanalytic approaches that saw the aims of psychoanalysis from a different perspective.

Frosh and Baraitser argued that whilst Kleinian object relations approaches seek *to explain* (a process they describe as “redemptive” (p. 355)), “for Lacanians, it is precisely the constant deferral of meaning that is at issue” (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008: 355). This Lacanian practice is for them the ‘more usefully disruptive’ use of psychoanalysis because it might afford greater utility to social researchers working in a psycho-social field: approaching the process from a Lacanian position might offer a way of tolerating meaninglessness or the constant evasion of meaning (as distinct from the pursuit of meaning).

This perspective about meaning and the goals of psychoanalysis reflects other post-Freudian approaches. Bollas, for example (1999: 59-74), argues that the goal of psychoanalysis is free-association, a radical free association that liberates the subject from the negative consequences of civilisation and its concomitant “cultural suppression” (p. 74) that would otherwise “make him or her ill”; such a goal – free-association worthy of the name – is not compatible with object relations-based therapy, because of the latter’s hermeneutic focus. In Bollas’ argument, object relations-rooted theory and clinical practice seek

³⁰ The metaphor is unsatisfactory, because a stand-off is not won gradually: it is an impasse which results either in one side backing-down, or in an explosion of violence; the metaphor succeeds, however, in pointing toward a potentially violent conflict.

to use analysis to explain and create meaning (by locating cause and effect), whereas his model of free association is more like a Pinter or Beckett play: ideas, images and thoughts may be juxtaposed and freely associated with each other but, ultimately, there is a quality of the absurd in the universe that defies meaning.

The challenge for social researchers working with a Lacanian view of psychoanalysis is – put simply – how to conduct ‘real world research’ using an intellectual framework in which certainty about that real world is rejected, in which the very subject of investigation is conceived as “fragmentary and lost, or a thoroughly fictional entity”. This may partly explain Frosh’s view (expressed elsewhere) that “it can be easier to write theoretically about psychosocial studies than to carry out empirical work” (Frosh, 2014: 168).

There are, however, other ways of thinking about the unconscious and the goals of analysis for the patient, and these provide a different philosophical basis for psychoanalytically-informed research practice. For example, the classical Jungian model frames the ‘goal’ or ‘purpose’ of psychoanalysis as the ‘Transcendent Function’ (see above, pp. 69-75). In this view of analysis, Jung also saw of the end of analysis as constantly deferred, but not its meaning: analysis is imagined as a vital, libidinous process and part of life, accompanying life, ending only with the end of life; the Jungian acceptance of the non-conclusion of analysis is thus optimistic and teleological, seeing analysis as the space in which the transcendent function is enacted, becoming a process directing the ego towards its end (in several senses of that word). In Jung’s description of clinical practice, just as one issue emerging from the unconscious is addressed, “the conscious mind [...] is confronted with a new aspect of the psyche, which arouses a different problem, or modifies an old one in an unexpected way” (Jung, CW 11: 780). This is far from the free association as imagined by Bollas, or a Lacanian ‘play of signifiers’. The

transcendent function is a process of dissolution and construction “in which thesis and antithesis both play their part”, putting an end to internal conflict “and forcing the energy of the opposites into a common channel [such that] the standstill is overcome and life can flow on with renewed power towards new goals” (CW 6: 827-28) – in this conception of the process, there is direction, movement, telos. In this view, the human subject is held in relationship with a radical transcendent other, on which subjective meaning is predicated.

Other researchers rooted in different psychoanalytic traditions are equally mystified by the Lacanian crisis of subjectivity. Paul Hoggett cites the late sociologist and psychoanalyst Ian Craib, who was “perplexed” by the radical use of linguistic philosophy and Lacan to attempt to reason away the existence of the real world and the subject. Craib is reported to have

tried to imagine his response to a patient who, on entering his consulting room, said ‘I am a social construct’. While as a clinician Craib would have diagnosed insanity, as a sociologist Craib noted the paradox that the social construct who had entered the room and was insisting upon his fictional status depended upon an accomplice without whom he had no being. This accomplice – the ‘I’ as in ‘I am a social construct’ – is the social construct regarded as a delusion, something conjured up by discourse. (Hoggett, 2008: 380)

Hoggett’s clarity emerged from his clinician’s perspective: it may be less easy to enjoy the play of signifiers and theoretical *jouissance* when confronted on a daily basis with the embodied actuality of human suffering. The body, indeed, for some psycho-social researchers forms a basis of knowledge. As Hoggett puts it,

far from being constituted by discourse, the subject is first and foremost a site of sensuous experiences originating from both within and outside

the body, experiences that are first manifested affectively and that only later may (or may not) be registered discursively. (Hoggett, 2008: 381)

The issue here, therefore, is less about psychoanalytic theory (or *which* psychoanalytic theory) and its operationalisation in psycho-social studies, so much as more fundamental questions about epistemology and ontology. It is about the roots of knowledge and reason, and how loss of reasoning can lead to loss of reason – that is, to madness:

when reason reflects on its deepest foundations, it discovers it owes its origins to something else. And it must acknowledge the fateful power of this origin, for otherwise it will lose its orientation to reason in the blind alley of a hybrid grasp of control over its own self (Ratzinger and Habermas, 2007: 40)

And in that regard, it may be useful to make use of some of the philosophical framework offered by Critical Realism.

Observations from Critical Realism

The debate outlined above is, at its core, about what can be known and whether there is a reality or a truth that can be known; it is about whether the subject is ‘real’ or ‘actual’ – in the bodily, somatic sense that Hoggett talks of the patient – or entirely a construction of discourse; it is about whether the proper field of psychosocial studies is to trouble and disturb questions of what is known, or to construct meaning.

In the post-modern logic of Frosh and Baraitser (as articulated in their 2008 article), Lacanian approaches to psycho-social research emerge from epistemological doubt, a doubt that maps onto a radical subjectivity and

relativism: this is a world of social research shaped by the linguistic turn and the assertion that the “logical conclusion of the constructivist / constructionist argument” (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008: 360) is to state that the only certainty is subjective, the only truth the subjective one. Psycho-social studies should, in this view, be located as “part of a movement against objectivism in the social sciences [...] an approach that challenges the idea that there can ever be a ‘truth’ that is separate from the practices that give rise to it” (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008: 358). Such a vision of social research offered by Frosh and Baraitser is (as Tony Jefferson characterises it) “Lacanian, reflexive, disruptive, and concerned to reveal nonmeaning rather than meaning” (2008: 367). The theoretical basis underlying this approach is one in which statements about being (such as “subjects are produced discursively” (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008: 360)) inherently conflate ontology (the question of the existence of the subject) with epistemology (that there is a discourse through which knowledge is constructed). In so doing, they deploy the ‘epistemic fallacy’ that Critical Realism identifies, “the view that statements about being can be reduced to or analysed in terms of statements about knowledge” (Bhaskar, 1998b: 27).

This thesis rejects that fallacy, and follows a critical realist perspective in recognising “the *relativity* of our *knowledge*” whilst also maintaining “a clear concept of the continued independent *reality* of *being*” (Bhaskar, 1998a: x)³¹ – that human experience is more than Frosh and Baraitser’s “play of signifiers” (2008: 355). In defending the reality of the world in which social relations occur, the world of experiences and events that form the objects of this study, I deploy insights from Critical Realism to support much older philosophical perspectives.

³¹ Italics in the original.

Critical Realism accepts that some aspects of knowledge are relative – that “epistemology is always transitive, and therefore subject to the prevailing power arrangements in society” (Scott, 2000: 14) – whilst at the same time asserting that “there are objects in the world, whether they are known or not” (Scott, 2000: 14). It is a philosophical perspective that recognises that “knowledge is fallible because any claim to knowledge may be open to refutation” and yet that

there are transphenomenalist truths in which one may only have knowledge of what appears, but these refer to underlying structures which are not easily apprehended; most importantly, there are counter-phenomenalist truths in which those deep structures may actually contradict or be in conflict with their appearances. (Scott, 2000: 14)

In constructing this philosophy, Critical Realism has formulated a ‘depth ontology’ which recognises three domains of existence: the real (characterised by mechanisms), the actual (consisting of events) and the empirical (consisting of experiences) (Scott, 2000: 14).

Critical realists distinguish the real from the actual and the empirical. The ‘real’ refers to objects, their structures or natures and their causal powers and liabilities. The ‘actual’ refers to what happens when these powers and liabilities are activated and produce change. The ‘empirical’ is the subset of the real and the actual that is experienced by actors. Although changes at the level of the actual (e.g. political debates) may change the nature of objects (e.g. political institutions), the latter are not reducible to the former, any more than a car can be reduced to its movement. Moreover, while empirical experiences can influence behaviour and hence what happens, much of the social and physical worlds can exist regardless of whether researchers, and in some cases

other actors, are observing or experiencing them. Though languages and other semiotic structures/systems are dependent on actors for their reproduction, they always already pre-exist any given actor (or subset of actors), and have a relative autonomy from them as real objects, even when not actualised. (Fairclough, Jessop and Sayer, 2015: 3)

Critical Realism is thus “transcendental in the sense of Kant” (Bhaskar, 1998a: ix) – arguing that that features of experience are predicated on something other, that which is transcendental, and lies ‘behind’ our experiences.

A Jungian framework of the psyche can be characterised as fitting this critical realist model of ontology and transcendental realism. The critical realist acceptance that one may only have knowledge of ‘what appears’, but that what is observed may refer to underlying ‘structures which are not easily apprehended’ and to ‘transphenomenalist truths’ seems to align to Jung’s theoretical model of archetypes (summarised above, pp. 91-92). In Jungian archetypal psychology, the symbolic (known either at the *empirical level* of experiences or the *actual level* of events) points to structures which are not easily apprehended, but which operate at a transcendental level, being part of the system that structures meaning. As the Jungian analyst Roderick Main puts it, for Jung, the symbol is an expression of something partly known or conscious (and thus immanent) *and* partly unknown or unconscious, which the classical Jungian model conceives as transcendent:³² “Jung was willing to allow that the transcendent could be known hermeneutically through its expression in the immanent” (Main, 2017: 1112).

Furthermore, the ‘depth ontology’ model of the real, the actual and the empirical (with its associated distinctions between mechanisms, events and

³² Main, R. (2017) ‘Panentheism and the Undoing of Disenchantment’, *Zygon*, 52. citing CW 6: 814–29.

experiences) can be applied to other theoretical discussions within psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. Earlier, in Chapter 2 (cf. pp. 47-49), I summarised the distinction made by Hinshelwood (building on George Klein) between two types of theories about psychoanalysis: clinical theories (about which there is agreement between different modalities of psychoanalytic psychotherapy), and meta-psychological theories (the territory of disagreement and distinction between Freud, Klein, Jung, Adler etc). I have already suggested that the clinical theories of psychoanalysis (which are recognised by the different psychoanalytic modalities) mark the territory of the psychodynamic: resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, fantasy and the therapeutic alliance. These clinical terms name processes that are ‘experience-near’, known to both clinicians in the actual and empirical domains of their consulting rooms and to educators in classrooms, where they will recognise such psychodynamic events or experiences. These experience-near clinical processes are to be distinguished from the meta-psychological theories which point to the ‘underlying structures’ which are not easily apprehended. That there are competing theories for describing meta-psychology, and yet at the same time a common vocabulary for ‘events and experiences’ that are shared across the different psychoanalytic schools, should not surprise us if we apply the insights of Critical Realism: for critical realists “knowledge is fallible”, “any claim to knowledge may be open to refutation” and “there are counter-phenomenalist truths in which those deep structures may actually contradict or be in conflict with their appearances” (Scott, 2000: 14).

Critical Realism accepts that there are some aspects of the domain of the real that will be unknowable, and radically transcendent. Whilst this expression in Critical Realism is recent, the thought itself is ancient. St Ephraim the Syrian,

writing in the fourth century CE compared any attempt to understand the entirety of knowledge with an attempt to drink dry a spring of flowing water – an impossible task (one might say a mad one to attempt) – and extended the metaphor to suggest that one should be satisfied with what one can know:

A thirsty man is happy when he is drinking, and he is not depressed because he cannot exhaust the spring. [...] Be thankful then for what you have received, and do not be saddened at all that such an abundance still remains. What you have received and attained is your present share, while what is left will be your heritage. For what you could not take at one time because of your weakness, you will be able to grasp at another if you only persevere. So do not foolishly try to drain in one draught what cannot be consumed all at once, and do not cease out of faintheartedness from what you will be able to absorb as time goes on. (Ephrem the Syrian, before 373 CE)

This metaphor connects with other ancient thought about the transcendent, such as the Graeco-Roman myth of Semele. Semele was Jupiter's lover, with Jupiter taking the form of a mortal avatar to do so (because no human can survive an encounter with the entirety of God); made jealous by Jupiter's own (equally jealous) wife Juno, Semele tricks Jupiter into allowing her to see him as he really is – as Jupiter reveals his entire divinity to her, Semele melts: no human can know the entirety of knowledge and survive.

A man ... must sense that he lives in a world which in some respects is mysterious; that things happen and can be experienced which remain inexplicable; that not everything which happens can be anticipated. The unexpected and the incredible belong to this world. Only then is life whole. For me the world has from the beginning been infinite and ungraspable. (Jung, 1963 (1986): 390)

I accept that I risk here being “pious” (as Frosh and Baraitser put it), and offer “the type of reading of psychoanalysis that sees it as harbouring the deep truths of human nature” (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008: 348). However, Jungian psychoanalysis does explicitly engage both with the clinical actuality of a person’s life and with philosophical and spiritual questions of what it is to be alive – and what structures and metaphysical realities might lie behind life. In this regard, Jungian approaches to the unconscious seem particularly well-positioned to link productively with the recent “spiritual turn” (Main, 2017: 1116) of Critical Realism.

All of which means that, in the more parochial question of whether psycho-social studies should be spelt with or without a hyphen, I agree with Hoggett:

The hyphen in psycho-social signifies a difference that cannot be dissolved. It therefore opens up the space for thinking, like an enzyme that assists digestion. Individual/social dualism is not overcome by merging them, by making them simply a matter of perspective where, to quote Frosh and Baraitser, “inside and outside flow together as one, and the choice of how we see them is purely tactical”. The hyphen signifies the transitional space, the space of overlap and interpenetration.
(Hoggett, 2008: 383)

This is a perspective which, whilst recognising the importance of social construction, acknowledges the reality on which social constructions are built, that accepts that “given that I am part of this material reality, I do believe that a subject – in this case myself – exists beyond discourse” (Hoggett, 2008: 380).

The Particular Question of the Clinical Interview

Many of the methodological complexities that emerge in the cross-disciplinary nature of psycho-social studies are brought into sharp focus when looking at the particular example of the ‘clinical interview’ in its application to social studies. This issue is relevant to this study because the first set of primary data (presented in the next two chapters) emerges out of interviews with a respondent, and this process required the consideration of the methodological and ethical complexities surrounding psychoanalytically-informed social sciences interviews.

The usage of the term ‘clinical interview’ is worth unpicking. Outside of the highly specific context of social research, the term – as any quick internet search will demonstrate – usually refers to an interview conducted by a clinical practitioner, counsellor or therapist for the purposes of therapy, diagnosis or research into those very clinical processes. It has also relatively recently become applied by social researchers to interviews conducted primarily for the creation of social research data; this usage emerged in the 1990s, when researchers working in social sciences, psychology and related disciplines began to recognise the value of learning from psychoanalysis something about the intersubjective aspects of what happens in an interview. Frustrated with what Steinar Kvale has called “the tyranny of verbatim transcripts and formalized methods of analysis” (1999: 105), many qualitative researchers sought a form of data construction that recognises the inter-relational nature of the interview. Such endeavours recognise that the qualitative research interview is rightfully a

construction site of knowledge. An interview is literally an inter-view, an interchange of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest. (Kvale, 1999: 101)

In their *Doing Qualitative Research Differently*, Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson authored what has become a defining articulation of the methodological approaches that have developed into psycho-social studies (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). In their 'Producing Data' chapter (pp. 26-54), Hollway and Jefferson articulate a defence of the use of "Clinical case-study approaches" in social-sciences, approaches which emerge from their "look outside research" for methods that capture something of the complexity of respondents' lives (p. 32). The whole book is an extended critique of the shortcomings of conventional social research methods, that were "losing sight of an understanding of whole people in real-life contexts" (p. 32); crucially, Hollway and Jefferson offer the insight derived from psychoanalysis that it is normal for ego defences to be active in conventional interviewing contexts (in their case, interviews about participants' fear of crime). This observation that interviewees in research projects might be "defended subjects" (p. 26) transforms how conventional interview data are read (explaining apparent superficialities, and raising questions about the meaning and interpretations given to apparently straightforward responses), and also results in a very different approach to method. Transference and counter-transference, relationship, the subjectivity of the interviewer as well as the interviewee, the emotional quality of the interaction and the impact of all this on the ethics of the process now become legitimate forces to be considered in the process of the design of qualitative research projects. This theoretical position has led many researchers in psycho-social studies to follow their lead and make use of the 'clinical interview'.

It is, however, important to acknowledge that any social research project interview cannot be a 'clinical' interview in the sense that it cannot be a "therapeutic" interview (Kvale's term), because the interactions are firmly outwith the therapeutic space of the clinic. As Stephen Frosh and Lisa

Baraitser put it, in their challenge to Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson, “transference and countertransference, for example, are simply not the same in and out of the consulting room” (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008: 363). Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman acknowledge this methodological issue by describing the interviews they conducted not as ‘clinical’, but as being “conducted in a ‘clinical style’” (2003: 43). I choose to go further, and describe the interviews I have conducted as ‘quasi-clinical’, and in Chapter 6, I present data which was conducted in such a quasi-clinical manner: dialogic, collaborative, and informed by clinical experiences, practices and method; psychoanalytically-informed, but not actually psychoanalysis. It is my hope that such a term acknowledges the similarities between the processes whilst marking their distinction; it also indicates a sensitivity to the risks involved in undertaking and participating in such interviews.

These risks – that engaging in psychoanalytically-informed social research *risks* becoming a version of psychotherapy, but without the frame around it that professionalises, defines and protects both clinician and patient – have been acknowledged by others. Kvale notes that

a research interviewer’s ability to listen attentively may, however, in some cases, lead to quasi-therapeutic relationships, for which most interviewers neither have the training nor the time to enter into.

(Kvale, 1999: 105)

Hollway and Jefferson show how easy it is for relationships constructed during the social research process to develop to the point at which they have a quasi-clinical impact. In the case of Fran (2000: 88-90), they show how a ‘clinical style’ interview approach is capable of changing what and how people talk to social researchers. Hollway and Jefferson’s approach to the interview (as mentioned above) was deeply informed by clinical practice, and thus marked

by an open, unstructured style, a focus on the respondents' stories, an openness to free-association, a sensitivity to the intersubjective psychodynamics of the relationship, and a commitment to creating a relationship with the participant) (2000: 32-54). With Fran, this approach had a significant impact, observable over the course of a sequence of interviews; initially "brusque and instrumental", in the second interview Fran "opened up" and talked about "her relationships with her ex-husband and with her children, a childhood characterised by a violent father (who assaulted her brother and not her) and her fear of rape and sexual assault" (2000: 86). By the debriefing interview, she was speaking positively about continuing such conversations with a professional counsellor (2000: 89). For Fran, the social-sciences interview, when conducted in a 'quasi-clinical style', was clearly part of a clinical continuum; this supports the argument about how close to therapeutic processes research interviews can become, when the defences of the social-sciences interview are removed (defences that protect the defended subject of the researcher, as much as they might mirror the defences of the participants).

Such a similarly "quasi-therapeutic relationship" emerged for one researcher in the work conducted with middle-school children in London, part of a team including Stephen Frosh and Ann Phoenix. The researchers acknowledge the to-and-fro of the transference/counter-transference, active in what reads to me as having an erotic aspect, activated in only a brief interview:

[the interviewee, John] is also able to elicit genuine warmth in the interviewer, who despite being appalled by John's violence ends up liking him and finding it hard to say goodbye [...] That John tells him that he "*would be available at any time*"³³ if required for more interviews

³³ Italics in the original – it's not clear if that is meant to convey any emphasis.

suggests that an exchange is occurring in which the interviewer is emotionally touched by John. (Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman, 2003: 51)

There is a sense of loss here, about a child's need, perhaps about the interviewer's emotional need as well, about possibility, and about a relationship that could not be more than it was. It highlights another key difference between the social research interview and the therapeutic conversation. In Kvale's view, the fact that most social researchers do not have a clinical training or the time means that they should approach 'clinical interviewing' with caution, and "be careful not to promote some kind of therapeutic expectancies from their subjects" (Kvale, 1999: 105-106). This is a subtly difficult issue, because whilst the social research interview is *not* a clinical interview, it is clear from the example above that the emotional and inter-subjective encounter that occurs when someone demonstrates interest, compassion and concern can trigger the "intense interaction and critical questioning", which should normally, in Kvale's own view, be "out of bounds" for academic researchers (Kvale, 1999: 109). Furthermore, considering the matter from a Jungian point of view (as summarised in Chapter 2, pp. 57-75, above), I would argue that something of what happens in the interview exchange is archetypal: when two people meet in meaningful encounter, projection of unconscious parts of the personality occurs, and this brings about the unpredictable, alchemical mixing of these projected elements. Some of these connections – if meaningful encounter is to be fostered at all – may be inevitable. These flows seem even more likely to be activated if the psychodynamic is in some way a focus of the research, or if one or more of the participants have the temperament, life experiences, psychic structures or the training that increases sensitivity to fantasy, and the other psychodynamic forces defined in Chapter 2 (resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict,

object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, the therapeutic alliance and the impact of the unconscious itself).

These are risks, because they risk certain particular types of harm, in particular the risk of harm in the shape of “uncalled for self-knowledge, or unnecessary anxiety”, as the British Sociological Association puts it (BSA, 2002). However, as Hollway and Jefferson argue, such a position can be considered problematic because it treats harm and distress as equivalent:

the conflation of harm and distress tends towards an ethical principle that the participants should be left unchanged by their experience of the research (which is in any way impossible). (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000: 87)

Distress is not the same as harm (as the case of Fran demonstrates). I follow Hollway and Jefferson in recognising that the central ethical factor is the relationship with the participants:

Perhaps the decisive ethical difference is that in our research context the participants are active co-participants in the relationship within which the interview data are produced. (2000: 87)

Whilst it is the case that this thesis contains only one set of data produced with another person (the co-authorship sections in Chapters 5 & 6), and that it contains a significant amount of auto-ethnographic material, relationship was central to the creation of that data. ‘Rhiannon’ (whose story is presented in Chapter 6) is a teacher, and a colleague, with whom I have built up a relationship over decades. Although it is not presented in this thesis, the other participants in the co-authorship project were also all colleagues – friends, indeed (which raises other issues) – with whom I had constructed mutually-supportive professional relationships in the course of years (fifteen years in

two cases, four years in one case). On reflection, I realise now that my decision to approach as participants people with whom I had a strong relationship (which some questioned) was founded on this ethical concern about the need to attend to the consequences of the research process, and that by researching with people whom I knew professionally, and with whom I continued to maintain a relationship, it was likely to be easier to manage the changes that the process of quasi-clinical inquiry might generate.

I spent years planning – rather than doing – this PhD project because of exactly this issue: a concern about how the intersubjective might work in any interview, about the ‘quasi-clinical’ aspect of the work, about how my own psychic material might ‘infect’ respondents or collaborating participants, and about how to manage the relationships and the investment of time that would legitimate that “intense interaction and critical questioning” which is normally “out of bounds”. When I articulated these concerns on one occasion in 2013, a colleague tried to reassure me, by saying that these processes were all “just life” – psychotherapy was not “witchcraft”.³⁴ I wasn’t entirely convinced: some Jungians are happy to use the language of the shaman to describe what happens in analysis (Robbins, 2011; Downton, 1989; Groesbeck, 1989), and are most definitely prepared to consider aspects of what therapists do to be near to witchcraft, or at the very least some sort of spiritual healing.

So, whilst the interview can be ‘quasi-clinical’, actual clinical processes are different to research processes: a social sciences research interview is primarily about finding things out, a therapeutic interview comes from a very different motivation; in a therapeutic interview, the interviewee tends to seek out the interviewer; in the social sciences interview, it usually the other way

³⁴ During a supervision in 2013.

round. Frosh and Baraitser note this issue, commenting on Hollway and Jefferson's analysis of their interview of 'Vince':

Vince does not come to them for help – does not feel something is wrong, does not have a sense that the researcher can offer him anything, does not set up that particular transference on which the whole analytic encounter is based. On the contrary, Hollway (who conducted this interview) goes to Vince, wants to interview him, wants to find out something about him, wants to 'make sense of him', so the interaction is primarily driven by *her* desire. In this context, her feelings and responses have to be thought about as *her transference*, not her countertransference. (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008: 362)

Kvale offers seven defining aspects of the therapeutic interview: the focus on the individual; the open mode of dialogue; the construction of meaning; the investment of time (over a length of time); the centrality of human relationship; the instigation of change and the existence of an originating 'pathology' as the topic of investigation (1999: 94-95). It is a useful list. Intended to show researchers what clinical psychotherapy has to offer in the creation of more nuanced and richer data, it also highlights how far even psychoanalytically-informed research interviews can be from actual clinical processes. Psycho-social researchers certainly give due weight to the individual, value open dialogue and place the construction of meaning as central to any qualitative inquiry. But what of the investment of time (over a length of time), and the centrality of the relationship with participant; what of the engagement in change and the commitment to what Kvale calls 'pathology'? Even if these are idealised, is the social researcher's 'relationship' with a respondent qualitatively comparable to the sustained clinical relationship between an analyst and an analysand, between a counsellor and a client, relationships and dialogue marked by the "careful

testing out of interpretations which [are] the hallmark of a psychoanalytic exchange” (Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman, 2003: 51)?

These points of distinction – of relationship and time – seem to be the most defining markers that separate the social sciences research interview from the clinical conversation, and which present the richest ethical and methodological issues. On the one hand, the longer the conversation, the deeper and richer the exchanges, the more that is constructed, the more is known: more is more. What also changes is the quality of the knowledge, because – if we follow Kvale – “empathy [is] a mode of knowing” (1999: 105), and because with the investment of time (and in the case of therapeutic relationships, clinical skill)

the knowledge obtained in a therapeutic interview goes beyond the explicitly formulated verbal dimension to encompass tacit knowing. Much of the therapists’ knowledge is based on intuition, empathy, and listening to what goes on in the therapeutic relationship. (Kvale, 1999: 105)

With time and relationship, what is known between two people changes, as does the manner in which it is known; and whilst this raises epistemological questions about the nature of the knowledge, it is clear from the persistence of psychoanalytic method and thinking that the broad tradition of psychoanalysis has added “rich knowledge” to our understanding of “the human situation” (Kvale, 1999: 98) – knowledge that has emerged in the most part from clinical interviews, and data constructed in therapeutic contexts. Deep, meaningful conversation has been shown to help us understand not only the depths of the particular conversation, but aspects of what it is to be human.

This tension between the intimate particular and what might be generalisable brings ethical issues to the fore: whilst the knowledge that is constructed

between people might deepen as the relationship lengthens, what becomes known might not properly be shared outside the dyad in which the knowing has emerged without compromising the very relationship in which the knowledge has been created. Questions of power, rights and disclosure frame the conversation: in clinical relationships, the disclosure of this knowledge is tightly regulated, and most of the time protected by confidentiality; in social sciences, whilst there are regulatory processes that govern researchers' behaviours, the primary motivation is investigation and the quest for new knowledge – the therapeutic is accidental, and far from the primary purpose of the research; confidentiality becomes a relative, not an absolute value.

Conversely, I would also challenge Kvale's suggestion that clinical psychoanalytic processes are always about addressing pathology. A Jungian approach views the purpose of psychotherapy as something very different to simply engaging with the pathological: yes, patients may present with some suffering, but the overall objective of the process is more than that – it is about individuation, and the 'transcendent function', about the potentially unending, life-long, paedagogic process of becoming the person you are meant to be. And as soon as one reframes the focus on the pathological as a focus on individuation, it seems fair to argue that clinical psychoanalytic processes are – by one definition – maybe far closer to normal teaching and learning processes than perhaps to social science research.

One aspect which unites therapeutic clinical interviewing and quasi-clinical (or 'clinical style') social sciences interviewing is the form that emerges from the interview process. The interview or dialogue is rarely disseminated or distributed verbatim: it is collated, edited and analysed, with the resulting narrative presented as a clinical case study. Any narrative case study in this field is not just a form of data analysis, but also a literary form, with a canonical ur-type in the model Freud offered. Freud's case studies have been

profoundly influential, widely anthologised and taught on a range of university programmes: Little Hans and the Rat Man (Freud, SE 10), Dora (Freud, SE 7), the Wolf Man (Freud, SE 17), have all become iconic. “Certain cases, particularly Freud’s, have been assimilated into the modernist canon: Dora, the Rat Man, the Wolf Man, and Schreber are familiar characters to a literary audience” (Wells, 2003: 354). If not exactly a genre – though they might be considered as such – they are texts “with complex genre affiliations” (Wells, 2003: 356), and it’s worth noting that the Penguin edition of *The ‘Wolfman’ and Other Cases* (Freud, 2002 (1909-1947)) is edited by a professor of literature, Gillian Beer (and not by a psychologist or psychotherapist). The connection with literature highlights how psychoanalysis outside the clinic has resonated with spiritual concerns expressed by humanity in other forms – including the literary themes of suffering and tragedy.

And behind this (as Jose Mannu notes in his chapter in *Insanity and Divinity* (Gale, Robson and Rapsomatioti, 2014)) lies a Jewish hermeneutic method, the “search that goes beyond the letter of the text, and the importance of the word as action” (Mannu, 2014: 30): theological discourse is part of the archaeology of Freud’s clinical case studies.

The research presented in this project created two forms of data: autoethnographic material and co-authored narrative. The co-authored narrative emerged from a series of conversations with a collaborating teacher through which a single story emerged. The interview part of that process was quasi-clinical, both because the conversations were informed by clinical ideas (and in some sense by clinical method), and because of the explicit interest in what happens intersubjectively (informed by the psycho-social concern with the operation in the interview of psychodynamic ‘clinical phenomena’ – resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment,

attachment, transference/counter-transference, fantasy and the therapeutic alliance).

Defining the Dilemmas

That these clinical processes might become active in the interview process was a primary concern during the planning stages of this project: that the quasi-clinical aspects involved the risk of bringing to consciousness knowledge that people might not be ready to confront. To use different language, it paralleled the concern of the British Sociological Association that researchers should avoid work “where research gives rise to false hopes, uncalled for self-knowledge, or unnecessary anxiety” (BSA, 2002).

As noted above, one of the key ideas in this project was my experiential learning about transference and counter-transference, including the thinking about how the psychoanalytic ‘given’ of the erotic counter/transference process might play in legitimate teaching relationships. This specific element of the transference, the erotic transference, was something that gave me particular ethical concern. For analysts and psychotherapists, the erotic transference is simply a predictable element in most depth therapies, but something that has the quality of a trade mystery, something spoken of only within the safe boundaries of training, or professional seminars, or written of in the pages of obscure journals, read only by the inducted. There are no doubt numerous reasons for this reticence or discretion, not least that the presence of the erotic transference in various forms dogged the early years of psychoanalysis, and was a key element in the great schism between Freud and Jung (Kerr, 1995). For many teachers, these erotic transferences are a not

unfamiliar feature of teaching and learning relationships, but they are usually not spoken of – not least because of the particular nature of the risk that surrounds exploring fantasy in adult-child relationships. What might the consequences be of bringing these forces to consciousness? To those working in this intellectual and clinical territory the existence of these processes is a given and the nature of the phenomena is uncontroversial – but my concern was about how those in schools might react if drawn into a way of thinking and talking which led them to confront possibilities hitherto denied, including emotions that might have been split-off or in some other way repressed: emotions that they might consider illegal or unprofessional.

Furthermore, might blundering into the territory of the psyche be irresponsible and unethical, without the inquiry being properly framed? Encountering one's *own* unconscious can be an agonising and alarming encounter with split-off, denied contents, those shadow elements of oneself repressed and secreted deep inside – what would it be like to follow a research method in which the processes of the transference might unleash difficult psychic phenomena?

I had some idea what it might be like given the reception of colleagues to the proposal: reservation from some teachers, and excitement from others; whole-hearted enthusiasm from psychoanalytic colleagues; evasion from senior teachers; scepticism and resistance from some members of the doctoral school. My intuition lacked both a precise language to describe it, and a case study to exemplify it, until I later found it in Kerr's (1995) description of Jung's affair with his patient Sabina Spielrein: if one penetrates these processes with one's own unconscious material active, the results can get out of hand quite quickly. If one's own needs and anxieties are unconscious, they will become projected onto the respondents (and on to sampling and other elements of the method itself), with dire consequences. Who can predict

exactly what might happen in the ‘syzygy’, in the encounter between subjectivities and their contra-sexual projections (CW 12: Chapter III)?

These concerns were underpinned by an awareness that the research project was not just about creating new knowledge, but that the knowledge would be authored, potentially resulting in professional advancement and the award of a higher degree. My ‘pure’ academic ‘interest’ thus represented a risk, in that my *interest* in new knowledge became potentially blurred with an *interest* in promotion that might lead me to exploit the power relationship inherent in the researcher/researched split, or in some other way corrupt the inquiry. What might I do to protect everyone involved from me?

A Methodological Frame

One answer was to consider how the construction of boundaries around a study create a frame, what might be labelled a ‘supervisory frame’, an ‘ethical frame’, or a ‘methodological frame’. In speaking of a ‘frame’, I’m borrowing a concept from clinical practice. The ‘analytic frame’ as defined by Killick (2014), building on Bion and Bick, refers to the process and behaviours that delineate and protect clinical interactions, defining the boundaries and edges of the clinic, setting contexts and behaviours. The analytic frame is fundamental to facilitating the transference and the transformative power it offers; in much contemporary Jungian practice the frame is constructed on a theoretical basis of post-Jungian, post-Kleinian understanding, mediated by Fordham’s integration of Jungian psychology with elements of the Freudian psychoanalytic tradition, particularly Kleinian object relations theory. As Killick describes it, the frame may be the expression of this deep theoretical

understanding, but it is enacted through details that intrude into the analytic relationship and create boundaries: bills, starts and ends of sessions, and an analytic detachment paradoxically rooted in compassion. A ‘methodological frame’ might allow for the same space in which new knowledge could be created in the interaction between the author/researcher and co-researchers; and would be enabled by the maintenance of boundaries framing the process.

Extending that metaphor a little more, the methodological frame might allow for the creation of a certain borderline territory between two subjectivities, a place where new understanding might be generated in the alchemy of inter-subjective interaction, but in which the psychotic destruction of objective reality might be limited by the real enactment of boundaries and legitimate behaviours, of the protecting frame of ethics, and methodological rigour. It is something that Julie Walsh – another writer interested in the boundary between teaching relationships and psychoanalysis – has noted (Walsh, 2012). She has written about of the experience of the frame in university tutorials, and in her case of the need in those situations to *break* the frame because of the power of the forces operating inside the it. The transference and its allied psychodynamic forces are essential to that which happens within the frame, that which facilitates transformation, change, and growth towards better knowledge and understanding. Though coming from a Freudian tradition, Walsh’s writing speaks to what some Jungians acknowledge as the ‘shamanistic’ qualities of the psychodynamic relationship within the frame, of how powerful forces can be enabled when normal human exchanges take place framed by certain power structures. These things are not just normal life, they are ‘elevated’, extracted from normal interactions, creating special spaces out of time and normality in which particular things occur: change, learning, relationships, numinous memories.

These ethical considerations, combined with epistemological concerns about how someone who was not a psychotherapist might have a hope of talking legitimately about psychodynamic forces, led me to combine elements of a psychoanalytic training with the PhD study.

The Clinical and Experiential Pathway

When the project was first designed my expectation was that I would begin a part-time clinical training with the BAP (British Association of Psychotherapists, now amalgamated with the London Centre for Psychotherapy and the Lincoln Clinic and Centre for Psychotherapy to form the British Psychotherapy Foundation). At that time, my choice of the BAP was because my own experience of intensive three-times a week psychotherapy had been with a BAP-registered psychotherapist through the reduced-fee scheme administered by them. There are, however, a number of different routes towards registration as a psychotherapist, analyst or psychodynamic psychotherapist (and there are in the UK three different registers, those of the British Psychoanalytic Council, the UK Council for Psychotherapy and the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists, all of which are accredited by the statutory body, the Professional Standards Authority). After several months of inquiries and a number of meetings, I discovered the psychodynamic training offered by the Society of Analytical Psychologists (SAP).

The SAP was the first professional society outside of Zurich to offer a training in Jung's version of psychoanalysis, and was founded in the 1940s. Its first president was Michael Fordham – already mentioned, who had himself been

analysed and trained by Jung. Candidates following the full, so-called ‘classical’ or ‘analytical’ training (also sometimes referred to as a ‘four times-a-week’ or ‘three times-a-week’ model) study for four years, take training patients for either four or three times-a-week, and are in analysis themselves at a commensurate level of intensity. In 2012 the SAP began taking applications for an innovative psychodynamic model, requiring that the trainees be in therapy or analysis twice a week, and training them to offer psychodynamic psychotherapy with patients seeing them once or twice a week. This training leads to registration as a psychodynamic psychotherapist, with membership of the SAP, the right to register with one of the UK professional registers, the ability to join the International Association of Analytical Psychology, and the option for later modular training to convert this qualification to an analytical registration.

As part of the PhD project, and in preparation for my development of a formal qualification in psychotherapy, I undertook extensive pre-clinical training. From the commencement of this PhD project in 2013 until the summer of 2016 (when it proved impossible to fund any further) I re-entered personal therapy, accumulating 134 hours’ didactic analysis with SAP training analysts (this on top of approximately 480 hours of therapy undertaken in my mid- to late-twenties and early thirties). Analysis during the PhD project began with 12 sessions with a senior SAP training analyst (who retired); then, between 2013 and 2014, 40 hours with a second SAP training analyst (much of which was on a twice-a-week basis) and between 2014 and 2016 (following an unexpected retirement on medical grounds) 82 hours on a once-a-week basis with a third SAP training analyst. Between September 2013 and September 2014, I attended a once-a-week Infant Observation Seminar. After some considerable, but unsuccessful, effort to ‘find a baby’ (and a mother or care-giver prepared to make the significant sacrifice of participating in a two-

year observation process), I reluctantly withdrew from the seminar, joining instead the SAP's 'Foundations Course' in 2014-15, and the follow-on 'Jungian Processes Experiential Group' in 2015-16 and 2016-17 (I describe these in a little more detail, below, in the section 'Other Pre-Clinical Training').

All of this professional training was undertaken on the assumption that I would in due course apply to undertake the psychodynamic training with the SAP. In April 2017 I revisited the question of funding this pathway, and the sheer cost of the process (estimated at that time to be of the order of £30,000) forced a recalculation. I continue to explore routes into clinical practice and undertake unpaid work as part of a pre-clinical foundation, including hospital chaplaincy work and weekly counselling work for a local mental health charity.

Infant Observation Seminar

The motivation to join an infant observation seminar was not wholly clinical, it was also methodological. At around the time I formally began the PhD, I was introduced to the work of Phillippe Chaussecourte and his colleagues (Blanchard-Laville *et al.*, 2005; Chaussecourte, 2006; Bastin, 2012; Chaussecourte, 2012a; Chaussecourte, 2012b) who make use of the infant observation method pioneered by Ester Bick to research education and schools. This writing fascinated me, both in terms of the method (mirroring the infant observation approach) but also because of some of their conceptual approaches, including the notion of *l'espace psychique* in the class which emerged from Chaussecourte's writing:

je pouvais dire de *l'espace psychique* de la classe installé par l'enseignante et de son *transfert didactique*. Dans l'enveloppe psychique produite par l'enseignant, l'espace psychique est le lieu des projections psychiques des élèves et le lieu où l'enseignant peut élaborer les forces de déliaison à l'œuvre dans la situation didactique.³⁵ (Chaussecourte, 2006: 63)

Infant observation is an established experiential training method, often a core module in professional psychotherapeutic trainings. Building on Kleinian insights about the roots of object relations (but also used by the Jungian SAP and in other Jungian trainings), the key feature of the method is that the observer to spend an hour a week with an infant and its mother (or primary care-giver) for a period of a year or two years (depending on the approach of the training organisation). Observations are conducted without making notes during the hour, with notes made immediately after the observation and samples of these reflections taken to a weekly training seminar for analysis. Additionally, the observer is required to be in personal therapy for the duration of the observation. One of the many things that makes this process valuable is that the 'data' in an infant observation (in the form of the observer's reflections) emerge out of a collision of two powerful psychic forces: the objective reality of the mother-and-child relationship that is observed, and the subjective material of the observer, as she filters her memories of what has been seen through the frame of her own object relations, and the containing structures of the seminar group and personal analysis. Chaussecourte's method was to copy elements of this process, but relocate it into the context of the school, and instead of observing a child and mother, the observer sat with a class and its teacher for an hour a week

³⁵ I am able to speak of the *psychic space* of the class created by the teacher and her *teacherly transference*. In the psychic container constructed by the teacher, the psychic space is the place for the pupils' projections and in which the teacher can develop the power of coupling/un-coupling, created in the very work of instruction [my translation].

(Chaussecourte, 2006); the affordances of the infant observation approach have also informed other researchers investigating psychodynamic phenomena in schools, including that of Ellen Ramvi (Ramvi, 2012). My first plan, then, was to use this approach, though this had to change when (as noted above), despite a year of significant efforts, I was unable to find an infant to observe.

The time spent on the infant observation seminar was not wasted, however, because of what I learnt through being a member of the infant observation seminar. The process offered me a profound encounter with my own internal objects: the weekly focus on babies' relationships with their mothers, and the mothers' reactions, emotions and our fantasies about them provided experiential learning that changed my understanding of my own psychology. This is subject to a more extended reflection in Chapter 9 (where I present some psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography).

Other Pre-clinical Training

The loss represented by withdrawal from the Infant Observation Seminar (a loss of possible infant, of a possible mother) required a rethink. Not completing the infant observation meant that I was not going to be able to use the model of writing about transference and counter-transference that it afforded and I would be required to find another method for constructing data. I was keen to continue the pre-clinical training with the SAP, both because of my own commitment to this aspect of my professional development, and because this was envisaged from the start as part of the methodological frame around the research process. As noted above, on my withdrawal from the Infant Observation Seminar I joined the SAP's

Foundations Course: this is a pre-clinical requirement of the SAP and, in the words of the Society's website,

provides an introduction to key Jungian and Post-Jungian concepts. It consists of a talk from a member of the SAP, followed by small group discussions which allow these concepts to be further digested and personalized, also led by a member of the SAP. (Society of Analytical Psychology, 2018)

The Foundations Course was, essentially, a post-graduate Jungian studies seminar with (in the shape of the small group discussion that followed) an experiential element (a description of the curriculum is provided in Appendix A). Though advertised as 'small group discussions', the hour-long second halves were often referred to as 'the experiential groups', and these sessions were unstructured, with no starting point or direction provided by the SAP analyst in charge of the session. A rich range of material arose, with participants connecting the ideas introduced in the first hour to either their own psychology or to clinical material from their own practice: memorable discussions covered trauma, childhood abuse, alcoholism, religion, spirituality, archetypes, the Shadow, the Self, Jung's relationships with Freud (including reports of the Institute of Psychoanalysis' attitude to 'the Swiss psychologist'), and visions and dreams (one participant shared with the group an experience in which an entire building in a familiar street morphed one day into something from a different time and a different place, returning to its usual shape for her the following day).

The Foundations Course lasted an academic year. Continuation training was offered in the shape of the once-a-month 'Jungian Processes Experiential Group' (JPEG) which I attended in 2015-16 and 2016-17. The JPEG functions as a space for CPD for practising therapists, and for further

education for those leaving the Foundations Course but not immediately beginning a psychoanalytic or psychodynamic training. Each year explores a particular theme ('the Family' in 2015-16, 'the Body' in 2016-17), with each session divided into two halves: an hour of 'social dreaming' (Clare and Zarbafi, 2009) followed by an hour and a half of discussion or activity. In social dreaming the participants sit in a scattered seating arrangement or 'matrix', so arranged as to avoid direct relationships, confrontations or the implication of dyads; the session begins with a single dream, and from this starting point, dreams, fantasies and associations to them are shared, without discussion. The second half of the JPEG might include discussion or experiential activities such as drawing or small group sessions.

In addition to this pre-clinical training, I have undertaken a range of work in allied terrain. Between April 2017 and February 2019, I worked as a voluntary lay chaplain at my local general hospital, and am now a volunteer lay chaplain with the local mental health trust. The work in the general hospital took the shape of a half-day once a week visiting people as they are newly admitted to the hospital, extending to them the welcome of the Chaplaincy, and offering them a range of spiritual and sacramental services, some of which I was able to supply. This was primarily pastoral work under the supervision of the ordained ministers of the hospital chaplaincy team, but it frequently involved the use of psychodynamic skills as patients opened-up about their lives and often life-changing conditions. Whilst my motivation to undertake this work primarily arose from my spiritual journey (which is explored in more detail in later chapters), it is at times difficult to unpick aspects of spirituality from psychology, and this interweaving of the spiritual and the psychological is a theme in Jungian approaches to the unconscious.

Since October 2019, I have been working as a volunteer counsellor with a local mental health charity, supporting one client on a once-a-week, one-to-one basis.

Conclusion

What is important to make clear at this point is that, for the duration of this PhD project, I have not been undergoing a clinical training, only the pre-clinical elements of one – this inquiry is not, and cannot be, a clinical investigation. Psychoanalytic conversations are different to social sciences interviews, because of the frame within which the relationship is constructed:

The psychoanalytical relationship is construed to provoke emotional reactions. An emotional attachment of therapist and patient will arise over the many hundreds of hours of therapeutic interviews, theoretically conceived as transference and countertransference. This intensive personal therapeutic relationship may open to painful, hidden memories, and deeper levels of personality, which may be inaccessible through a brief research interview. The unique nature of the therapeutic conversation with the trust of personal interrelation opens for layers of self-disclosure not available in a brief research interview. The extended and close personal interrelation of the therapeutic interview allows for more penetrating critical forms of investigation and validation than will be ethically feasible in a brief research interview. (Kvale, 1999: 103)

This is a psycho-social study, informed and shaped by clinical theory and practice, and by pastoral and teaching experience; it draws on Jungian, post-Jungian and other models of psychology from the breadth of the

psychoanalytic traditions, and is influenced by Christian theology and philosophy.

This sort of research is risky; as Kvale notes, research based in psychoanalysis but which is produced using social sciences method has to navigate a difficult route, and such research “has produced a long history of rejected articles and shipwrecked dissertations”, it is a research voyage that “may be compared to Odysseus sailing the narrow strait between Charybdis and Scylla on his return from Troy, a passage that he declared as the most dangerous part of his long research voyage” (Kvale, 1999: 88). It is risky, therefore, in methodological terms – and it is risky in ethical terms because of the psychodynamic phenomena that are activated in a quasi-clinical interview or exchange (if it is to be quasi-clinical in any meaningful sense). Nor should these phenomena be regarded as safely confined to an interior space; as Stephen Frosh says about fantasy,

fantasy is not ‘just’ something that occupies an internal space, as a kind of mediation of reality, but that it also has material effects, directing the activities of people, and investing the social world with meaning (2003: 1554)

I would argue that this is equally true of other psychodynamic phenomena: resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, and the therapeutic alliance – all have material effects, directing the activities of people, and investing the social world with meaning. And the researcher has responsibilities when engaging with these processes.

To summarise, the following key questions emerged in the process of trying to construct a legitimate, rigorous, methodologically robust and ethically defensible method for data construction for this project:

what form of writing can hope to capture the psychodynamic aspects of teaching and learning?

how can participants in a study which explores psychodynamic aspects of teaching be protected from psychic contagion?

any attempt at exploring the psychodynamic aspects of teaching is likely to involve a risk of opening up risky themes or ideas; how can these be contained or processed as part of the research process?

ethical ways of proceeding in qualitative research are rooted in the construction and maintenance of meaningful relationships in which other participants are not objectified: what form of data construction (and analysis of the data) can hope to achieve this mutuality, reflexivity and co-construction of knowledge rooted in relationships between the participants?

These questions were partnered by the following key observations:

the researcher is not the only location of expertise;

intersubjective exchange is a powerful tool in reflexivity, and part of a process of creating an emergent truth.

In response to these issues, by the time of my upgrade in the summer of 2015, I had determined to use co-authored narratives as a way of creating data. Although predicated on methodological concerns, this decision was also precipitated by a stark logistical issue: other forms of possible data construction required access to schools, and this was not always easy to obtain. Recruiting teachers to participate in the project proved to be easier than obtaining access to a school and its pupils.

This concludes the introductory Part I. Part II (Chapters 5 and 6) presents the co-authored data constructed during this project with one other teacher: Chapter 5 outlines the methodology and co-authorship method, and Chapter 6 presents a single co-authored narrative. Chapters 5 and 6 precede Part III (Chapters 7, 8 and 9) which presents the auto-ethnographic material.

PART II

CO-AUTHORSHIP

Chapter 5

Co-authorship, Methods

Introduction

Part I of this thesis was focused on positioning the project, and consisted of an introductory chapter, two chapters reviewing relevant literature and a methodology and ethics chapter (that last addressing certain general methodological issues about qualitative research, epistemology and ontology). That first part presented the issues that the research engaged with, located the research in psychoanalytic discourse, psycho-social studies and (psychoanalytically-informed) education studies, and provided a background to this Part II (Chapters 5 and 6) and Part III (Chapters 7, 8 and 9) which present the primary data that was constructed during the research. This Chapter 5 explains the approach adopted to create the co-authored narrative that is offered in Chapter 6.

Creating data collaboratively with another teacher was designed to open-up the questions posed in Chapter 1 about generalisability and transferability of certain aspects of psychoanalytic knowledge about teaching. These included questions about whether my experiences of the ‘quasi-clinical’ in the classroom were actual (or just my fantasy), whether what I have come to call ‘psychodynamic incidents’ in teaching were more about my own psychological material and little to do with the others’ experiences, and whether I was

outlier – a single case or data set of 1 – with the subject of the research simply my ‘baggage’: in short, whether psychodynamic forces are or are not active in other teachers’ lives (rather than just my own).

And beneath it all lay the ethical and methodological concern about how the boundary between the clinical and the paedagogical could be safely investigated in an ethical and responsible manner, about how to explore what psychotherapy might offer to help us understand teaching, whilst respecting the fact that teaching is not clinical psychotherapy.

Co-authorship emerged as a potentially productive approach to this sort of research for a number of reasons. The collaborative nature of the co-authorship relationship would necessarily have to extend over time and engage with questions of interpretation, authorship, writing, editing and creativity – and this offered the prospect of a more diffused power-relationship between the two writers involved. It was also hoped that, because the co-authorship was about blending two contrasting ‘expert’ perspectives (one in school, one not), the co-authored method might prove to have a wider utility, and might be used by others to create an evidence base about psychodynamic incidents in teaching. Co-authorship offered a model that might make it possible to take the idea of the ‘psychodynamic’ from clinical and academic work, and recontextualise it through collaborative practice into the reflective practice of serving teachers. The co-authorship method thus held the prospect of the participating teacher taking control of the process of making meaning of the psychoanalytic possibilities – of these ideas not just being ‘transmitted’ into the school, but processed, made sense of, recontextualised, brought into the praxis of the participating teacher.

The focus, then, of these next two chapters, is on the experience of other teachers. In contrast, Chapters 7, 8 and 9 (forming Part III), through the use

of psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography, will offer extensive data about and analysis of my subjective experience of ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching’, and explore in more detail how my own psychology was at play in my life as a teacher. The focus of those chapters is on my subjective experience, and will present my attempts to answer the questions posed above about how my psychology – including its potentially problematic elements – was at play in my teaching practice.

This chapter, then, explains why I set out to write a co-authored narrative with another teacher, and how we did that. The next chapter presents that narrative, and its analysis.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry challenges existing power structures, partly through the very form of the new knowledge that is created by narrative, which in its substance challenges existing understandings of the world. Narrative inquiry is about “experiencing the experience”; it is “the best way [...] to think about experience” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000: 80). Narrative research explores how people are “emmeshed in local doings”, and how those narratives are “shaped by ideologies, social relations and social agendas in different communities, times and spaces” – the practice of narrative research accepts that “narratives are shaped by context, but [that] they also create new contexts by mobilising and articulating fresh understandings of the world, by altering power relations between people, by constituting new practices” (De Fina and Georgakopoulou, 2015: 3). Through what it is, narrative subverts the power structures and relationships that are built on normative forms of knowledge

and cultural capital. For this reason, narrative inquiry is proper to those forms of research activity which engage with inquiry as part of a process of change, something that can be characterised as “research as praxis” (Lather, 1994: 72) (in contrast to “research for praxis” (Kemmis, 2010: 19)).

Research as praxis is a phrase designed to respond to Gramsci’s call to intellectuals to develop a ‘praxis of the present’ by aiding developing progressive groups to become increasingly conscious of their situations in the world. At the centre of an emancipatory social science is the dialectal, reciprocal, shaping of both the practice of praxis-oriented research and the development of emancipatory theory. In praxis-oriented inquiry, reciprocally educative process is more important than product, as empowering methods contribute to consciousness-raising and transformative social action. Through dialogue and reflexivity, design, data and theory emerge, with data being reorganised as generated from people in relationships (Lather, 1994: 72).

However, it is a mistake to assume that simply writing a narrative with the involvement of an ‘other’ person will resolve questions of power, status and object-subject relations (a point, as already noted, made by Svend Brinkman and Steinar Kvale). Simply ‘giving a voice to the voiceless’ does not remove oneself from one’s own power, be it institutional, gendered, raced, cognitive or economic. As Patti Lather acknowledges, with an ironic turn of phrase, it is possible to commit “sins of imposition” in pursuit of laudable objectives of liberation (Lather, 1994: 78).

There is a persistent danger in objectifying the respondent, and the conventions of qualitative research do not always assist in problematising these power structures. Things that are often assumed as givens of ‘good practice’ (such as according respondents’ anonymity) can be highly questionable defensive manoeuvres. For example, anonymity, rather than simply being a

process in which respondents' identities are concealed for their own protection, needs also to be seen as part of a process in which *authorship* is constructed *and protected*; in something that starts out attempting to protect the real lives of their respondents, writers and researchers end up acting-out a phantasy in which the researcher, Prospero-like, is the master of the books, rendering the respondents citizens-without-names in wild, un-visitable places – unvisitable because though actual, they cannot be identified: the flip-side to anonymity is the impossibility of challenge. Respondents can even lose their humanity as they are extracted from their context, made little more than elements in a grander project outwith their control; like Caliban, they are constructed as inhabitants of a brave, new world, to be proudly written up in a book. One thinks of what happens when anonymised case-stories break-cover, and amplify their response to the 'them' that otherwise passes unchallenged (as with the famous cases of Freud's 'Wolf Man').

One of the best known narrative inquiries into teacher subjectivity is that of Deborah Britzman into the experiences of beginner teachers, *Practice Makes Practice* (Britzman, 1991), including the narratives of 'Jamie Owl' and 'Jack August'. Britzman's writing provided a coruscating critique of initial teacher education in the United States in the 1980s and '90s, and her narratives of her two respondents' miserable experiences certainly made me grateful both for her writing, and for the superior quality of the initial teacher education I experienced in 2000-2001. Jamie Owl's experience of ITE is a depressing collision of the individual with the forces of capitalism and the state: the narrative form succeeds in making it clear how appalling this experience was for her, and how poorly served she was by a gamut of organisations responsible for her training. However, the form adopted, in which first person narratives from Jamie Owl's interviews are framed by interpretations from Britzman, ineluctably places Britzman in the empowered position of 'the

author', the expert talking head, the authoritative exegete. The text acknowledges that 'Jamie Owl' had a chance to read the draft and comment on what Britzman had to say about her, but one might wonder what those exchanges were like: the form adopted backs Britzman into a corner, in which Jamie Owl is victimised, her position frequently described in terms of lack, failure, or deficit. The issue is the form of the writing, in which the narrative of the subject is made into an artefact which can then be explained by the knowledgeable author. Take this example:

Jamie's narrative is striking because she recognises the absurdity of placing young ignorant persons in charge of the educational process. (p. 86)

The point is clear, but the description of the respondent as "ignorant" is troubling – and also wrong, since it serves to negate what knowledge and skills Jamie might actually possess, but be unable at that time to manifest. Elsewhere, Jamie is again described in terms of deficit: she has insight, but it is "limited", her attempts to use a humanistic approach to position herself in relationship to the impossible position she was in are dismissed as an attempt at an "impossible transcendence" – no credit is given to the attempt at making meaning of the position in which she was placed. This is all a direct consequence of the *form* that's been adopted in which the subject is objectified, and the 'researcher' obliged to 'interpret' and 'explain' without a fully intersubjective engagement of the other collaborator, sometimes still referred to in social science research as 'the informant'.

One problem here is about the researcher's relationship with success (her own analysis in this case) and failure (the distressing and depressing experiences of her respondents) – for Britzman's analysis to succeed, both 'Jack August' and 'Jamie Owl' had to be presented (in some way) as failures. In such

circumstances, the standard response is to fall back on anonymisation, and the use in this case of pseudonyms – but these can often only be partially successful in concealing identities. Notwithstanding the questions of power that underlie this epistemological logic, and the researcher’s monopoly on cognitive insight, this situation creates a very difficult transactional dynamic, one that will have an effect on the analysis itself, potentially skewing what is thought and written: scrupulous reflexivity can only go so far in bringing to consciousness unconscious motivations and desires, framed as they are by the economic and other pressures on researchers to further their own careers.

The form adopted by Britzman falls short of a radically inductive narrative inquiry, and reveals the foreshortening of the encounter with the unconscious implied by Freud’s deductive approach, in which experience is often shoe-horned into theoretical models. With a text emerging out of an intersubjective dialogue, co-authored narrative offered the prospect of reordering – *in the very form of the narrative* – the relationship between the subject and the object of the data, and so constructing a greater equality between the participants.

Co-Authored Narrative

Something different happens to writing when two people collaborate: new and different truths emerge. In one of the modules I teach, I specified a reading by Kyungmee Lee and Clare Brett (2015), from which one of the teachers I work with drew out the following quotation, from Mikhail Bakhtin: “all utterances have both an author and an addressee ... all utterances are half ours and half belong to the addressee” (pp. 74-75). In this particular example,

I selected a reading (explicitly about dialogic understanding and inter-subjectivity), but only properly noticed a detail of it when it emerged in someone else's writing (itself evidence of and product of their own thinking and reflection on these issues), and now that thought has entered into my own work here. Such inter-subjectivity is an accepted reality of any qualitative research interview and is for many "taken for granted" (Schmidt, 2012: 7), but the forms of inquiry that are conventionally available to researchers often evade (or defend against) the possibilities of collaboration and co-authorship, often falling back on normative and commonplace, capitalist notions of authorship. One reason, therefore, for exploring co-authorship was to find a way of capturing *in the research process* the reality of intersubjective inquiry. Related to this was a wish to problematise and diffuse power in the research relationship.

From a feminist perspective, Rosalind Edwards and Melanie Mauthner (2002) caution about the power relationships that are implicit in certain research methods. Drawing on Wise (1987), they ask us to question the "cognitive authority" (2002: 19) of the researcher, who has been endowed with the official status that allows them to decide what is and what is not knowledge. Svend Brinkman and Steinar Kvale (2005) offer a coruscating critique of new conventions of qualitative research, in which researchers opt unthinkingly – one might say 'unconsciously' – for qualitative interviews, without thinking through four key problems: the asymmetrical power relations in the interview; the one-way dialogue of the interview; the instrumental nature of the exchange; the manipulative quality of the dialogue; and the interviewer's monopoly of interpretation (pp164-165). For Brinkman and Kvale, the interview has to be seen within the logic of contemporary capitalism, in which the individualism of the interview fits the logic of the post-industrial consumerist market. Social research risks taking the form of something that is

done *to* people, where aspects of their lives are captured and analysed later by someone writing *about* them. Simply opting for a ‘clinical style’ or ‘quasi clinical’ interview approach (as explored in the last chapter) is not automatically a solution to these ethical and methodological questions: clinically-informed social research has to balance its quest for “deep and probing” inquiry (risking intrusion) and the need to be “as respectful to the interview person as possible” – a sensitivity and potential reserve which brings with it the risk of “getting empirical material that only scratches the surface” (Kvale, 1999: 106).

The quest for mutuality in understanding has echoes in Jungian approaches to clinical practice. In his discussion of ‘the Practical Use of Dream Analysis’, Jung (CW 16) cautions against “one-sided interpretations”, and encourages analyst and analysand to approach the unconscious as partners in a hermeneutic process that will change both of them. His writing here offers a Jungian approach to the co-construction of knowledge, in this case between analyst and analysand:

Understanding should therefore be understanding in the sense of an agreement which is the fruit of joint reflection. The danger of a one-sided understanding is that the doctor may judge the dream from the standpoint of a preconceived opinion [...] the doctor should regard every such dream as something new, as a source of information about conditions whose nature is unknown to him, concerning which he has as much to learn as the patient. (pp146-147)

and again, having first described the dream as a “text”,

the best way to [read a text] is to establish the context. Free association will get me nowhere, any more than it would help me to decipher a Hittite inscription. It will of course help me to uncover all my own

complexes, but for this purpose I have no need of a dream – I could just as well take a public notice or a sentence out of a newspaper. (p149)

This collaborative method, offering a degree of humility in the face of the unconscious, builds on the radically inductive quality of Jungian psychology. Steinar Kvale quotes the Jungian analyst, James Hillman, discussing this with Laura Pozzo:

The main thing is that we both get out of the way. What can block the interview is ‘us,’ your thinking about what you have to get done here, and my thinking about my own thoughts, opinions, biography, myself. The ‘you’ and the ‘me’ can prevent the ‘inter.’ It’s not our views that matter, it’s the ‘inter’. (Hillman, 1984: 8, cited in Kvale, 1999: 102-3)

The methodological question that arises from this ethical one, therefore, is what form of inquiry can be found that structures the balance of power in such a way that power can be made more symmetrical, in which knowledge can be constructed as part of an inductive process, and meaning can be co-constructed between those involved?

At the core of this project is the contention that, in the interaction between teacher and pupil, new knowledge is created between them, knowledge that is the product of mutual commitment and collaboration, knowledge that is held subjectively, but created inter-subjectively – as in the interactions between analyst and analysand. A central question that this project has struggled with, is how these values should be lived-out and worked-out with the teachers who have been part of the process: how should that shared, inter-subjective ‘third’ be constructed? what sort of data can be an adequate representation of the new knowledge constructed between people, but held in each individual participant? how mutual should the process be – how mutual can it ever be –

given imbalances of knowledge on both sides? Co-authorship offered a prospect of something radically collaborative in nature.

Co-authored Narrative: ‘Sonata Form’

An interesting element in my teacher education work has been helping other teachers to use narrative and journaling as a method of data construction, through a well-established master’s degree module. In this, teachers are invited to write journals about their day-to-day work, and capture critical incidents in teaching; the journal is then extracted, and interwoven with a critical analysis to produce a 5,000-word piece of coursework. Among the readings for the course was a co-authored narrative by Jerry Rosiek and Zachary Dean Sconiers (Sconiers and Rosiek, 2000b). This introduced me to narrative as a form of inquiry, and, in particular, their ‘Sonata Form’.

‘Sonata Form’ is a narrative approach that is co-authored, resulting in stories of experiences in school that are composed of a series of interlocking vignettes. It was innovated by a number of school teachers working with Jerry Rosiek (Chang and Rosiek, 2003; Mitchell and Rosiek, 2006; Petrovic and Rosiek, 2003; Sconiers and Rosiek, 2000a), and arose out of a joint project between some teacher educators interested in narrative research methodologies (Jerry Rosiek and Maria Lopez-Freeman) and a number of teachers working in state schools in Fresno (including Zachary Sconiers).

The method is described in Sconiers and Rosiek’s ‘Voices Inside Schools’ (Sconiers and Rosiek, 2000b). The joint project began with a two-day workshop, supported by the schools involved, in which the teachers were given lunch and the time to think through complex ideas; this was followed by

collaborative exchanges with their academic writing partner, during which ideas for narratives were developed; these were then further developed by the teachers in a three-day writing retreat; these texts then were reshaped by the academics for the purposes of publication in academic journals. The success of the project seems marked by the genuine interchange of ideas, which, certainly in the case of Sconiers and Rosiek, resulted in both writers offering to be the second-named author – and both agreeing that they had ‘no ready way to acknowledge the distinctive but equally essential contributions’ of each other.

This form of co-authorship, approached with a sincere, mutual commitment to co-construction, diffuses many of the ethical and methodological criticisms of Brinkman, Kvale, and Mauthner et al outlined above:

the researcher adopts a humility in the face of the unknown;

both I and my participants would be co-authors with shared cognitive authority, rejecting the simple imbalance of a conventional interview;

Q&A becomes a dialogue of mutual exchange of draft and redraft;

instrumentality is rejected in favour of process and emergence;

the risk of manipulation in conventional interviewing is replaced by an ethic of openness and mutuality;

the interviewer’s monopoly of interpretation is replaced by the prospect of a shared analysis over mutually constructed redrafts;

power relations aspire to a symmetry, and the capitalist logic of consumption is replaced by post-industrial co-production.

As well as drawing on Sonata Form, the approach adopted in the writing of the co-authored narratives with other teachers is also informed by the method adopted by Lapping (2011) in which she conducted a series of semi-structured interviews, which started with the respondent and her reading a text, chosen by the interviewee.

The Experiential Pathway

It is important to reiterate that the co-authorship project ran alongside experiential learning that was designed into the doctoral research, as noted above (p. 164-171), and which followed the model of the pre-clinical elements in a psychoanalytic training. During the period (autumn 2015 to Spring 2016) in which the co-authored narrative was created with ‘Rhiannon’ (presented in Chapter 6), I was also in therapy, a process designed as part of the PhD project, and with the ‘double effect’ of forming a preparation for a formal qualification in psychotherapy. As already noted, between January 2013 until the summer of 2016, I undertook didactic analysis (accumulating 134 hours’ therapy with SAP training analysts, this on top of approximately 480 hours of therapy undertaken in my mid- to late-twenties and early thirties); I had attended a once-a-week Infant Observation Seminar between September 2013 and September 2014; and during the period I was working with Rhiannon, I was a member of the SAP’s ‘Jungian Processes Experiential Group’ in 2015-16 (as I was also in 2016-17), this being the continuation of the experiential study of Jungian psychotherapy that I had undertaken as a member of the SAP’s ‘Foundations Course’ in 2014-15.

Structuring the Co-authorship Interviews

In their chapter on the theory and practice of ethics and feminist research, Rosalind Edwards and Melanie Mauthner (2002: 28-30) list eight questions that a critical, feminist stance with respect to ethics processes implies:

Who are the people involved in and affected by the ethical dilemma raised in the research? (and what are those dilemmas?)

What is the context for the dilemmas in terms of the specific topic of the research [...] and the issues it raises personally and socially for those involved?

Whom am I identifying with, whom am I posing as other, and why?

How will those involved understand our actions and are these in balance with our judgement about our own practice?

What is the balance of personal and social power between those involved?

How will our actions affect relationships between the people involved?

What are the specific social and personal locations of the people involved in relation to each other?

What are the needs of those involved and how are they inter-related?

These questions were very influential in my approach to methods, methodology and ethics, and my hope had been that their clear and explicit quality could have been used to help frame the working relationships with my participating co-authors (so establishing a relationship centred on explicit, transparent articulation of a connection rooted in an ethic of mutuality and openness). My original intention, therefore, was that a semi-structured

conversation around these eight questions would be *the very first* exchange between myself and my co-authors. Only when these questions had been satisfactorily explored by both of us would we move to the process of co-authorship. I had hoped that we would keep these questions in mind through the process of writing, revisiting them formally during the drafting of the co-authored narratives, and at the completion of the process of writing the narrative with each co-author.

2015 Method

After extensive design and redesign through the supervision, redrafting and ethical clearance process (including responding to the advice of an intellectual property lawyer,³⁶ whose views had been sought on the direction of the ethics committee because of the question of who owned a co-authored manuscript), a method for co-authorship was solidified by the summer of 2015.

The following is an extract from the redrafted “Information Sheet”, dated 23 July 2015, the full text of which is included as Appendix B

I expect the collaboration to take place through a series of meetings and exchanges of drafts over a six-month period or so, or (by agreement) a shorter or longer period. I expect that we will meet at least monthly.

The process of co-authoring will be conducted in three phases:

- a. **Phase 1:** exploring together the ethics of the inquiry;

³⁶ Email correspondence with A. P. Hewitt, partner and Celia Lloyd-Davidson, Withers & Co, 6 July 2015.

- b. **Phase 2:** framing the narrative (generating stories and themes);
- c. **Phase 3:** writing the narrative.

Phase 1 (exploring the ethics) will consist of a semi-structured discussion or discussions about the ethics of this inquiry and our relationship. We will start by discussing this agreement and its implications. Then we will develop the frame of our partnership through a discussion of some ethical questions about research, based on the work of Edwards and Mautner (2002). These questions are attached [...]. I expect we will return to these questions through the project, and it is my intention that we formally review them around half-way, and before ending. These conversations will be recorded, transcribed and exchanged.

Phase 2 (framing the narrative) is a series of unstructured, recorded and transcribed interviews. In Phase 2, we will generate the ideas that will become the material (the themes and stories) to be woven into the co-authored narrative (which will be constructed in Phase 3). I suggest that we open the dialogue through the exchange and discussion of a short text, article or chapter which we have each chosen. The suggested criterion for the selection of the text is ‘something important’ or ‘something that explores a key idea’ which seems relevant or interesting. This process should generate stories about the classroom or school. These conversations will be recorded, transcribed and exchanged, providing the core material to be made into the narrative through the process of editing and writing in Phase 3.

Phase 3 (writing the narrative) will be the process of collaborative writing. After a number of the recorded, unstructured conversations in

Phase 2, and when mutually agreeable, we will agree to focus on a number of emerging themes and stories, which one or either or both of us will begin to draft into a narrative, or story. I expect this to be a process of collating the material generated in the unstructured discussions in Phase 2 and editing and expanding them fit into a coherent, single narrative. It may be that you do the bulk of the writing initially, and I respond to your draft by reshaping it; or it may be that I start, and you edit my work. The objective is to create a narrative that arises out of your teaching context, but which allows us to understand elements of psychodynamic processes at play there. In very crude terms, you bring the teaching, I bring the psychodynamic theory, and we create a third thing through the narrative that emerges in the space between us. (Appendix B)

The intention was that this method would create a pattern of conversation, transcript, exchange of transcript text, dialogue about the text of the transcript, and conversation. I proposed that these cycles be repeated three or four times until particular ideas or themes emerged. Then, either I or my collaborator would take these ideas and shape them into a narrative, or story. I was prepared for this process to go in any number of directions: I realised the possibility that my collaborator might do the bulk of the writing initially, with me responding to their draft by reshaping and developing it; alternatively, I thought it possible that they might prefer that I start the process of writing the narrative, with them editing or building on my work. As with all of this, I saw the need to approach the process pragmatically and flexibly – letting my work be guided by what my collaborator wanted to do. The objective was to create a narrative that arose out of my collaborator's teaching context, but which allowed the reader to understand elements of psychodynamic processes at play in a story about events at school. Crucially,

this interpretation was to be done mutually, written by us both in a collaborative and reflexive manner, rather than being an objectifying ‘interpretation’ applied to my collaborator’s life by me from the distance of my desk and office.

My intention was that this exchange of drafts would continue until we were able to agree that the narrative was satisfactorily completed.

Rhiannon: My First Collaborator

Rhiannon and I met five times: 14 October, 4 November, (a session on 25 November was cancelled because another meeting overran) 28 December 2015, and on 8 and 27 April 2016.³⁷ The first meeting fitted into ‘Phase 1’ outlined above (‘Exploring the Ethics’); the second meeting corresponded to ‘Phase 2’ (‘Framing the Narrative’) and the final three were concerned with discussions around the draft, corresponding to ‘Phase 3’ (‘Writing the Narrative’). The draft was typed up by me, taking the stories that Rhiannon had told in conversation and weaving them into a single story for her scrutiny, correction and approval. She chose to be pseudonymised – rather than be a fully credited, named co-author – because of the controversial nature of the material she wanted to discuss, and so to allow her greater freedom to say what she did. We exchanged emails related to drafts in November and December 2015, and again in June 2019, and October 2020. We corresponded again on this subject on 14 & 15 April and 28 July 2021, when I asked her to review the final drafts of this chapter and Chapter 6 (which latter includes the psychoanalytically-informed analysis sections); on this occasion

³⁷ Recordings are dated, cross-referenced to text message and diary record.

she gave consent to proceed with publication, advising me that she “enjoy[ed] reading what you write”, thinking that the final product, the overall result of our collaboration, made “an interesting piece of work”.

Before moving to the presentation of the narrative that she and I wrote together, it may be helpful to present some extracts from our conversations, so as to give a better idea of the sort of working relationship that Rhiannon and I were able to construct. It is not possible to provide a full transcript in this thesis because Rhiannon’s talk was shot through with contextual details, and any full transcript would risk exposing her identity; for this reason, some redactions have been silently made in the extracts used below, and one or two very minor alterations to the text have been made – again, in an attempt to preserve her anonymity: but the core text represents the words she and I spoke in these extracts. It also needs to be remembered that in the co-authorship model adopted, the interviews were not the data – the data were to be the co-authored narratives, and the interviews were part of the process of constructing the narrative-as-data. These extracts of transcribed correspondence, therefore, are not exactly primary data as far as the co-authorship project is concerned, so much as evidence of working practices.

Rhiannon and I have known each other for some twenty years and remain in touch to this day, and had both worked in middle-management in education, though in different contexts. I approached the exchanges, therefore, with a sense that there was a relatively equal balance of power between us, with the balance of power possibly in her favour – I certainly regarded her as a peer, but one with significantly greater experience than I, and also more professionally successful. I am confident that she is better read than me in regard to literature and aspects of performance, and her successes as a leader were – in contrast to mine – sustained, consistent and, in HMI’s terms, ‘outstanding’. Rhiannon’s comment on the question of the power balance in

our relationship – coming, synoptically, towards the end of our first formal interview – was to state clearly “I don’t feel intimidated by you, and I don’t feel you are intimidated by me...” [00:32:46-9].

That first interview with Rhiannon broadly followed the shape outlined in the description above (p. 191), a semi-structured discussion about the ethics of this inquiry and our relationship. I opened the conversation by discussing our agreement and its implications, and the exchanges looked at our relationship, and framed our partnership through a discussion of some ethical questions about research.

The first ‘formal’ part of the interview touched on the ‘technical’ business of following the protocol, and the discussion of explicit consent: these are the sort of details that form the ‘methodological frame’ (described in pp. 162-164), and yet it proved to be a frame that we were unconsciously drawn to rupture, even in the first attempts to construct it:

AH There are so ... so the first thing we have to talk about is the ethics of this inquiry.

R Yes.

AH Which are basically relationships and power. Stuff like that. Erm, and the questions that I’ve got on this sheet, which you signed and then ... threw away?

R Mmhum [assent].

(Rhiannon had explained – at the start of our meeting, in a theatre café in north London – that she had lost her copy of the consent form; I will have supplied a spare. It must have been that she had signed it while I was getting the tea.)

AH I’d like you to sign one and give it to me, at some point. Oh, that’s one, there we go. We’ve got a question like ‘who are the people

involved in, and affected by the ethical dilemma, the research?’ or what are those dilemmas? You know what my dilemma is?

On the page, this question about ‘my dilemma’ may seem odd, or blunt – blunt to the point of either insulting or self-obsessed. This formulation arose from an attempt to make conscious the complexities of the ethical situation that we were both in. When I asked ‘You know what my dilemma is?’, what lay behind the question was a sequence of simultaneous thoughts along the lines of ‘can I explain the ethical risks involved in this inquiry? do you need me to? is it obvious? I know you’re not stupid, but I don’t want to assume you can guess what’s going on in my head – or what I meant by all this stuff’. Fortunately, in the situation, and in the context of what we knew about each other, my question was heard as an invitation to open up the complexity of our relationship. And that actuality – the relationship that we had built up over some twenty years – appears to have been more robust than the attempts to frame the interview through a methodological engagement with ethical questions; for whilst my attempts to progress through my protocol staggered, Rhiannon engaged with the key issues, recontextualising my academic ‘feminist ethical agenda’.

AH: [continuing] or the questions? I suppose we’re talking about emotions, psychology, relationships,

R [Silent]

AH ... and the context, so the context is [...] There’s quite a bit of baggage there, as well, isn’t there really?

R Prejudice, indeed.

AH What do you mean by prejudice?

R Before we begin our discussion, we already have some very clear ideas ...

AH Such as?

R Erm, opinions, of, say, senior management. [00:01:43-7]

Rhiannon and I had to report to different management in different organisations – her comment alluded to previous conversations about our contrasting rôles as middle managers in those very different institutions. I responded to this by raising a thought about teaching and about the young people we worked with:

AH because we started this conversation by talking about children.

R Yes. [00:02:02-1]

That thought emerged from a sense that ‘having a go at management’ might be too easy for us both – it might, in fact, be a defensive manoeuvre to avoid other relational and affective material and so avoid engaging with the (as yet to be fully articulated as such) phenomenon of the ‘psychodynamic incident in teaching’. The attempt to reshape the exchange must have seemed too forced, and I immediately switched back to Rhiannon’s theme, management, with us exchanging a joke about the insecurities of those in senior positions in schools:

AH And now your assistant head is in the frame. For the tape, the subject made a gesture towards her neck, as if strangulating it.
[Laughter] Erm.

Again, the comedy marking – as Freud warns us – defences, displacement and avoidances (Freud, SE 8: 50-56). I then tried to bring the conversation back to the ‘discussion of ethics’ in the terms articulated by Edwards and Mautner:

AH So I’m like, there’s another question here [indicating the list of ethical questions in the consent documentation], which is like, whom am I, as the researcher, identifying with, and I am identifying with you. Actually.

R Yeah.

AH Whom am I posing as other? and I'm posing, well, you've given us 'them'.

R Yes.

AH You talk a lot about 'them', 'they have done this', 'they have met', 'they require us to do all that'

R That's because they labelled themselves 'a team', as against merely the top of the hierarchy, which is very different.

AH So there's something to be said about ... when did they label themselves as a team?

R Whenever it came in on bandwagons.

AH But they're not a team?

R No, that's another problem.

AH Say a bit more.

R OK. Erm, I think 'a team' suggests a certain unity of outlook erm, and intention, so there could be divisions within that team within reason, and they would not necessarily agree with each other all the time, on the other hand, erm, they would have agreed to disagree or they would move forward after a discussion and I don't think that happens.

AH What happens?

R I think they are fragmented entirely and I think some of them dislike each other considerably, and in response will automatically take up an opposing position. [00:04:27-7]

Re-reading the transcript one of the things that is striking is that Rhiannon's answers in the first conversation open up a theme that was to be part of the narrative in the second conversation: management and leadership. This relates to the determination in this project to distribute control and power of the co-authored narrative through the co-authored narrative: whilst there was a protocol to be followed in the first formal conversation, and whilst Rhiannon knew my interest in psychoanalytical ideas – and asked many questions about them – the choice of narrative to tell was hers. What will I

hope be clear from later extracts of our conversations, was that the narrative writing stage of the process was (if not as exactly as unstructured as I had first hoped) iterative, with the narrative being driven by Rhiannon's interests and concerns. This is notwithstanding the fact that the specific events that form the body of the narrative presented in Chapter 6 had not happened when we conducted the first conversation.

I returned to the list of ethical questions in my protocol, the attempt to create a shared understanding about the ethical complexities in which we were both involved:

AH How do you think, how do you think what we are doing might affect relationships between the people involved, so that's you and me, do you think, do you think, well and everybody else as well, do you think this is going to have an impact on the, could this process have an impact on the school?

R I don't really know what the process is.

AH Researching and talking about you, I mean you and talking about school, I suppose, and your experience of being in the school. I don't know the answer to that question either, but I think we just need to think about it as a possibility, that the process might have impacts.

R So will you name the school in your ...

AH No, no, no, no, no, no.

R In that case ...

AH Yeah, but people might work out who you are, who 'Rhiannon' is.

R Really?

AH It's always possible isn't it? I mean, I'm doing my damndest to anonymize you, and to protect you and I will lie about ...
[correcting myself, regretting the use of the word 'lie'] well, we'll write the narrative in such a way that it's not obvious.

R Yeah.

AH And that's –

R Yes

AH And we'll do that scrupulously.

R OK. That's fine.

AH Erm. [Pause] Suddenly you're quite stilted, and you're not talking. You're –

R I'm more waiting for the next question.

AH Another question, Yes. Well, have you read those? [Referring to a text that was my offering in the 'exchange of texts' that was part of the interview protocol.] No.

R I just ... I find it very difficult to do in the abstract, when I don't really know what exactly your proposition is.

AH I suppose, well, the ... I think I just ... it's less of an issue with you, because you know me, I know you, you have trust in me and I have trust in you. But, we need to keep in mind that we're engaged in something which, er, which is about power, so you know that, there, we are to some extent turning it, challenging power but there might be an imp—, there might be an impact, you know, that's all, really, and we'll come back to these questions later on, ok? Yeah?

R Uh-huh. I'll stick my neck out!

AH Great! Lovely! [00:07:19-0]

This section shows the degree to which we both were involved in a shared struggle to understand what sort of psychological inquiry my project was, as conveyed in Rhiannon's repeated sentiment "I don't really know what the process is" and "I just ... I find it very difficult to do in the abstract, when I don't really know what exactly your proposition is". She was right – I didn't entirely know what I wanted to do at that point either. When Rhiannon explained that she found engaging with ethics "very difficult to do in the abstract" and that she didn't exactly understand my "proposition", I tried to explain the *ethical* questions, when – on reflection – it seems clear now that

she was asking for more of an explanation of the psychoanalytic aspect of the inquiry. In that regard, I remember feeling initially reluctant to go into detail, partly because of a mis-placed methodological concern that I might inappropriately ‘influence’ the participant, and partly because I had not fully articulated at that point the two foci which emerged as a result of the complex methodological journey undertaken during this project: the creation of data that captured my own subjective experience of psychodynamic incidents in teaching (which became the focus of the autoethnographic element of this project), and the creation of contrasting data about psychodynamic phenomena that are events or experiences in the lives of other teachers (the focus of the co-authorship approach).

It is striking also, seeing it on the page, that I offered to “lie”. It would have been more accurate to have said ‘utter untruths to conceal your identity’ which is what I believe Rhiannon took me to mean by this (and Rhiannon has read this commentary, and accepts that reading of the transcripts). That exchange formed part of the longer dialogue that ran through the whole of this first interview, about anonymity, ethics, and what would form appropriate topics for the narrative; and in that regard, what might be encouraging is the quality of the partnership that emerges, marked by a robust to-and-fro around the method, ethics, and key questions in the inquiry.

R So we’re not writing about children?

AH Yes, we could write about children. Well ... thinking about children, but I was, the reason I was censoring myself was that you were concerned when particular individuals came into mind, so erm, we ... all ... all that sort of stuff, we could write about all that sort of stuff. Erm, yes, we should write about children. What would you like to say about children? what ideas come to mind?
[pause]

R I thought you were taking a lead on the angle?

AH It's mutually constructed, you see.

R Yes. But [pause] as before, you did a study before didn't you, on certain children? [00:13:19-2]

Rhiannon then moved from this idea to an outline of an experimental teaching method 'Let's Think' which was being trialled in some London schools. After exploring that idea for three minutes or so, I asked how we could connect it to the co-authorship project – which only brought back the question (which I realised I had not really addressed properly) of what exactly the co-authorship project was about:

AH What's the connection between that and what I have been doing or what we're what we're trying to do here, do you think?

R I'm not sure what we're trying to do here ...

AH OK. [...] It became clear to me during the course of the conversation that you weren't clear what we were trying to do. Erm, I'm trying to explore those er areas of teaching and learning that which are close which are erm a bit like what happens in erm in clinical interactions in psychoanalysis ... er ... You have an idea, I sense the idea, or your class, or you know how feelings play in the classroom ...

Between [00:17:59-0] and [00:21:52-7] the discussion considered in detail the risks associated with a particular case study. That particular case explicitly engaged with questions of empathy and compassion, but it was one Rhiannon was unwilling to pursue because the specificity of the circumstances risked exposing the identity of the young person concerned.

R I think I'd like a clear focus. [00:23:21-6]

AH Well, we construct the focus together. [00:23:24-6]

R Yes, I got that idea, but as soon as I say I don't want something for the focus, you seem to persist with it [indistinct utterances]. [00:23:30-2]

At this point it seemed that Rhiannon thought that I wanted her to engage with the subject she had introduced, but was uncomfortable writing about for the purposes of the co-authored narrative – this was not the case, I had no desire whatsoever to push her into writing about things she was uncomfortable about, but it is interesting that she had that feeling, a point which I addressed as soon as it became conscious.

AH I thought you said you wanted a focus? Oh, you mean like the idea of being a ...

R I don't like the focus that you're suggesting.

AH I'm not suggesting – [laughter] I'm not er, I'm not forcing down that way. I'm just saying that if it's around.

R No, no, I appreciate that.

AH If you don't wish to talk about it, if you don't write about it, and I can understand why, but we just need to be aware that it's around.

R Yeah, yeah, yeah. [00:23:57-3]

Rhiannon's assent here seems to suggest that what was spoken ("If you don't wish to talk about it, if you don't write about it") conveyed at the level of feeling the sense 'if you don't wish to talk about it, we don't write about it'.

AH So what that focus would be, we don't, I don't think we quite know yet.

R Oh, right.

AH So it may be moving roles between being a head of department, which is very relevant, to head of year, to er, what was the other option you said, classroom teacher?

R I didn't, but yes.

AH Yeah, yeah.

R Or you could have that ... are you interested in the way that the senior management team affects the middle management team, and its effects on ...

AH Totally.

R On children's learning. [00:24:27-1]

From this springboard, Rhiannon suggested the following possible foci for the narrative: "external pressures", [00:25:10-4] "league tables" [00:25:14-3], and changing "government requirements" [00:25:19-3]. Agreeing that this 'school-focused' agenda is what she could bring to the narrative, she added that she thought I had "the psychoanalytical language that would be appropriate" [00:26:43-4]. After some further discussion, Rhiannon returned to the question of management, adding (in an explicit acknowledgement of the question of the relationship between thinking and feeling) a psychoanalytically-informed flavour to the potential narrative:

R Well, I think it would be, there are all sorts of issues, aren't there, like ... the hierarchical muddle within schools, so that it is very far removed from other examples of hierarchies like, the police or medicine, or whatever [...] and whimsicality of them [...] But also, just in terms of decision-making, that unreliability of reaction, really, and the just responding at the time emotionally, without a very clear set of moral rules, really to work from.

AH I, I, I think that's very interesting territory, and ... and what sort of emotions are around when, when decisions are made, as well, I think that's quite interesting.

R Yeah ...

AH As well as your own emotions.

R Mm.

AH Yeah, no, I think that's great.

R Frustration. [00:31:53-3]

That first interview was concluded with our agreeing to let go of "the whole exchanging texts idea" [00:32:24-6], and with my suggestion that

AH So, maybe, what I could do is go away and out of this interview, generate some questions that er we can return to or can, be more you know, I can ask you, er, that arise, you know, so you've raised some questions from this conversation, which I can then use to prompt the conversation in a month's time, or two months' time?
[00:32:13-9]

Second Meeting, Framing the Narrative

The meeting on the 4th November 2015 thus began with my bringing forward some of the themes that had emerged in our first meeting; to do this, I had gone through the recording of our first meeting, and pulled-out the themes that emerged, writing each on a separate piece of paper, which I laid out in front of Rhiannon for her consideration, association and review: management making emotional decisions (rather than conscious decisions); the multiple role of teachers; the possibility of 'sensing things'; the question of whether or not teaching is about emotions; the degree to which colleagues are friends and friends are colleagues (or not); the thought that school is a family (or maybe not, and the good and the bad aspects of that); the care of children – care and the boundary between care and teaching; the sense that something in the school was 'collapsing'. I also offered the possibility of using certain technical psychoanalytic language around transference and counter-transference to explore some of the ideas that arose in the first conversation, and offered the explicitly psychoanalytic ideas of separation, fragmentation, and splitting, including some references to the work of Melanie Klein, with which Rhiannon reported familiarity.

In response to Rhiannon's methodological questions about the process and how psychoanalytic thinking might be relevant to the work that we were

doing together, I offered an association – a memory – about how I had felt in the past that sometimes teachers’ needs had been projected onto pupils (or schools). I also added an explicitly methodological thought that had arisen as I reviewed the recording of our first conversation:

AH But the other interesting thing that’s happening in this is that, [...] me struggling to make sense of the, of that interview that we did last month, er, there is a, there is a, I am getting better at understanding what the research process is about that, and that’s a and that happens between the two of us, so as in a, a psychoanalytic clinical interview, in a clinical relationship, it’s not one person does something to somebody else, it’s not a medical model it’s something happens in the interaction between the two. And then into that we add your school. [00:10:54-7]

These amplifications were, I considered, an appropriate response to her interest, and were also appropriate in the context of the co-authorship process, in which Rhiannon was a peer, and a colleague. I went on to offer one last elaboration of the method (at least in this interview), and again emphasised that the interest was in the story or stories that *she* wanted to tell, and then – most likely drawing on Hollway and Jefferson – I just asked her for the most interesting story that happened that week. It was an approach that worked as the successful cue for the narrative which is now presented in Chapter 6.

AH And the other thing I’m trying to do, in this sort of method, is not overly structure your responses, so I’m trying to, I’m very keen that it comes from, it comes from what’s happening to you, so that these are stories that ... and I mean another method might not, bearing in mind all of this, it be me just to say, ‘well, tell me, tell me the most significant story that’s happened this week’.

R God, I’ve got a big choice there. [00:11:26-2]

A Note about the Co-authored Text

In the original research design, I had expected that there would have been more than one co-authored text offered in this thesis. My expectation was that each narrative would have developed iteratively in very different directions, taking different styles and forms, depending on the contrasting qualities of the professional and creative relationship developed between me and my putative collaborators (and I expect that to be true of any future collaborative writing). As it happened in this particular project, there is only one co-authored narrative offered here, and that possibly skews readers' perceptions of the creative and democratic possibilities of collaborative writing – Dave Kellman's article on cultural identity and the process of co-authorship' gives an indication of the sort of possibilities I have in mind here (Kelman, 2018). I had imagined that some collaborators would have wanted to do the bulk of the writing (Rhiannon chose rather to say her stories, and have me write them up); I had thought that my co-authors might have wanted to be fully credited as such (but Rhiannon chose to go by a pseudonym – primarily to allow her to talk about some difficult and problematic material). Nonetheless, this is Rhiannon's story. I helped it take the form that it finally took, but the narrative is the story that she wished to tell, and also one I very much wanted to hear.

Chapter 6:

A Narrative Experiment

Rhiannon

It must have been the Wednesday just after half term, and a rumour had been going around that some of the girls were going to make trouble outside school – some said there were weapons involved.

The first that Rhiannon learnt was when she asked the other children about the empty desks in her class that afternoon. Where was Tasha? That empty chair was an annoying gap: Tasha had proved to be a handy child to have in class, and was always coming up with good ideas about *Macbeth*. The ironies.

On the way back to the staff room after the lesson, there was one of them, sullen and slumped over a desk, outside Marika's office – and another kid quietly working through some maths problems on the first floor near the staff room.

The other four were “held”³⁸ outside offices spread around the school.

³⁸ The text of the narrative is a blend of Rhiannon's words spoken in our interviews in 2015-16, with writing by me to shape it into a story. Much of the prose thus silently adapts Rhiannon's words, and embeds them in my contributions. I have decided not to mark any direct quotations from Rhiannon embedded in the text (which might be done, for example, with italicisation) because this has the effect of a certain intrusive fussiness on the page, and undermines the purpose of the project (to write a readable story). When it is

This left Jane, the head of Year 10, with a bit of a problem. Having six kids from your year internally suspended because they might have been planning an armed attack later that week is hardly bread-and-butter for a head of year in even the roughest comprehensive: anyone would expect them to get a bit of top-cover from senior management. Nothing, however, was doing.

Tracey (one of the other English teachers) had found Jane, at the end of break on the Thursday, and she was near to tears.

‘She’s had about as much as she can cope with.’ Tracey leaned in, over a cup of coffee in Rhiannon’s office. ‘There are six of these kids, one outside her office, one outside Marika’s and another outside John’s. There are another two up at the other end. And the Deputy Head wasn’t there, so she appealed to Marika who’s stomping around saying ‘no, no’, she didn’t think she could have anything to do with it ... Jane feels very unsupported – she was nearly in tears – a PE teacher, in tears! I’ve never seen anything like it.’

Rhiannon caught Jane at the end of the day, and got her to talk. ‘No one’s really dealing with it, and no one helping me deal with it at all: there are these kids who’ve been taken out of lessons for two days, and there might be knives in this. Who knows, the police might need to be involved. And all Marika can do is have a strop when I ask her for help; and everyone else – all the other SLT – are just avoiding it, not answering my emails or backing me up. I can’t do this on my own, it’s not my job, it’s too big – six kids, knives, exclusions: even if they are in my year, if I did anything, it shouldn’t be me making these decisions.’

necessary to use inverted commas, I have, however, maintained the convention used elsewhere in this thesis: double inverted commas are a direct quotation (in this case, from Rhiannon), single inverted commas are used as ‘scare’ quotes, or to mark direct speech that is not a word-for-word quotation from something Rhiannon said.

Marika's refusal to do anything was the key to it, really – apparently, she'd just strode past the Head of Year's office, throwing a "I can't deal with this now" at Jane's appeal for help. That must have been one of the things that pushed Jane to the edge of tears. But what was Marika getting at?? It seemed so emotional a reaction, as if she were either in an uncontrolled strop, or maybe making some sort of point, like "it's not going to be my job if it's not anybody else's job". The thing about Marikia, thought Rhiannon, pouring herself another cup of tea, is that she works very well when guided, so long as there's someone senior who'll tell her what to do: then she'll do it. And she's very good at what she does – dealing with troublesome children, isolating them, or whatever, but if no one tells her what to do, if no one gives her *orders* ... and this, this flat rejection to help, this was an emotional response, "I'm not dealing with it, if the ones above me aren't dealing with it". As if she were saying "if no one else can be bothered to do it, I'm not going to bother to do it". Which seemed to Rhiannon quite strange, really, for a grown-up. "I can't deal with this now." She was making some sort of stance that she wasn't prepared to do the work if other people weren't ... or did she mean that she wasn't coping, either, and that she needed help – but didn't know how to ask?

Whatever she meant by it, it left Jane with the problem.

When it came to it, there were half-a-dozen suspensions. Things like exclusions are not done lightly, headteachers have to report them, defend what they do – there's a degree of accountability and the Head tries to avoid exclusions. And when there are a number of children like that on a serious incident, you need quite a few people, you need to move them around the building, and all these teachers may have been trying to teach, as well. Support was just lacking; there was Jane, just come up with her year group from lower school, where the other assistant head would have moved in,

instantly, and helped her. Here she was in a new part of the school and, in Rhiannon's mind, she was very conscious of being abandoned – everybody else just seemed to be too “busy”.

Poor Jane. Rhiannon felt for her. After all, she was Toby's wife. Toby was Rhiannon's “Boy”, the youngest teacher in her department, her second in command, and the only man. That made him her Boy. A clever boy – and Rhiannon likes clever boys. His being married to Jane meant that Rhiannon knew Jane better than she might otherwise, discovering that, she was very literary, with a particular liking for Yeats.

It's very poor when people are let down like that. No, it wasn't good, people being let down. And that was a change. Rhiannon was used to people taking responsibility, being proactive, whether they think it's their job or not, they were willing to help. Suddenly, she realised, she was watching people lagging behind all the time now, waiting for things to unravel before they took the slightest piece of action. It had come to intrigue her – this process of watching when people avoided responsibility: and there they are, at the top of management, and *incompetent* – and you think that the systems will all take place, but they don't; what you get instead is denial and avoidance. That refusal and denial must have been what put Marika into a rage when Jane asked for help, but Marika's refusal to do anything herself was itself part of the problem.

And all that has an impact on the children. Like with the Year 10 parents' evening. That happened in the middle of all the indecision about the knives. They hadn't said whether the excluded children were meant to come or not – they'd just avoided that issue, hoping it would go away, like all the other ones; and no one knew (least of all the parents) whether the six children were meant to be in on parents' evening or not. Presumably the children were not

allowed to come – but Rhiannon didn't know, and the parents didn't know; and the children didn't actually know – whatever it was that they sensed. Really, I mean really, the teachers at least should have known – should have been told one way or the other. I mean, *really*. No one *knew*; everyone was left, *feeling*. Maybe the children guessed it, since none of the six turned up – when you're a child in a school that works like this, you probably get quite good at sensing things that aren't always put into words. But none of that was made very clear to Rhiannon, and maybe it wasn't made clear at all. Maybe, she thought, it just wasn't clear to management either; but really, you'd think they'd notice the approaching iceberg of a Year 10 parents' evening, when a large chunk of that year group were under investigation for bringing knives into school.

"I'd rather have liked to have spoken to one of Tasha's parents" Rhiannon explained "because Tasha is an interesting case of a child who orally is very on-the-ball, and is very responsive in class, but whose writing was not up to the same sort of standard. And therefore – unlike a lot of the children – there is something to talk to the parent, that might have been helpful ... in that we might have been able to work out why that was and perhaps remedy it to a point, as I suggest reading to the parent, and not just to the child. So I think it's a great shame; a great shame."

Earlier that morning, she'd had another encounter with the disastrous head of sixth.

"Now, Dave" (she thought it best to be familiar, banterish, with such a man, in such a state of life) "when are the Oxbridge and medical exams today?"

"The Oxbridge and medical exams?"

“The Oxbridge and medical exams.”

“Oh, I’ve never had anything to do with those exams.”

She was stunned. Silent ... for a fraction of a second.

“Dave, you may have missed this, but you’re Head of Sixth Form.”

“Oh, I thought you’d arrange it.”

Which is exactly what she went on to do. Rhiannon strode up the stairs to the sixth form common room, taking two at a time, working out a plan to rectify this impending disaster, passing the exam’s officer’s cupboard on the way to sort out his side of the arrangements. Astonishing! The head of sixth not bothering to organise the Oxbridge and medical exams! This would simply not have happened last year, when Sarah was around, she *always* took charge, always took responsibility: Dave was simply a poor replacement ... paid the money, but just not doing things!! Like the sixth form calendar (just not done); like the sixth form study day (just not done); like the arrangements for the taster day (just not done) – she had to step in and sort that one out as well, saving the Year 12 theologians from a random cover lesson and an RE teacher from pulling a lesson out of the air.

The Sixth Form Calendar. What a disaster that had been. That was part of what used to be Sarah’s job: dull, fiddly, detailed administrative niff-naff – but something that really made a difference because it added value, and when done properly helped to co-ordinate things for teachers and students. But then Dave took it over – he did a draft of the Sixth Form calendar, and he altered it, and fiddled with it. Fiddled with it again. And again. And what a mess that it had turned into: the first Rhiannon learnt of it was on the day of the ‘taster lessons’ for Year 11. The idea of ‘taster’ lessons was that A-Level teachers run special sessions in the autumn term for Year 11, to give them an

idea of what studying that particular subject might be like at A Level. It has to go in the Sixth Form Calendar, so everyone knows it's coming, because it's additional to the timetable, and requires the cancellation of some normal lessons so that the normal A-Level teachers can show-off to Year 11. But instead of the normally smooth process, with Year 11 enjoying an afternoon of gratuitous learning (and the sixth form getting the afternoon off), Rhiannon met uproar that day, with her Year 13s complaining about getting lessons from a cover teacher who had no idea what they were doing.

“But the 6th form go home on taster lesson afternoon” she said “weren't you told on Monday morning??”

“No, Miss.”

“But isn't it in the calendar?”

“What calendar? Because we haven't actually got it yet ... ”

So she undid the mess, and sent the Upper Sixth home: they didn't have a pointless, badly planned, extra RS lesson. But, she thought to herself, even though she'd sorted out a crisis, “I don't really think I have the authority to do this.”

That the taster afternoon for Year 11 happened at all was a miracle. Could Rhiannon get anyone to tell her how many were going to be in her group? Not an unreasonable request she thought, since this had been on the cards for some time, and she did actually need to know how many things to photocopy, what size groups to run. Except the organisation just wasn't happening.

She went to the Sixth Form office to have another go at getting the numbers out of the stand-in head of Year 12. It wasn't a big office: there were three

desks in it and some chairs to talk to parents or students, Rhiannon's desk was at one end, next to Lisa the Sixth Form secretary; the Head of Year 12 had his desk in the near the opposite wall, facing into the room; Dave had a desk there, too (but he avoided the office for some reason). When Rhiannon got there, Lisa was there along with the Head of Year 12.

She asked her question: 'Anyone know how many kids in my Year 11 taster group?'

What she got in return was eye-rolling at this unreasonable demand from the stand-in head of Year 12, who should have organised this some time ago.

Rhiannon bit her tongue, and turned to Lisa, the sixth form secretary:

'Lisa, can you tell me the numbers?' Not a word out of the Head of Year 12.

There was a pause; then, from Lisa, 'Er ... I can cross the room and er ...' Silence all the while from the Head of Year 12. Lisa walked across the room, pulled a paper from a pile on his desk and said 'I can tell you at the moment that there's 20 in one and 30 in the other, but ... er, we, er ... I can try and rearrange them, to balance them up'. Still silence from the Head of Year 12.

'Thank you' said Rhiannon. What she thought, silently, to herself was "you're doing this for me, but this is not entirely your job".

It was odd to have been in that room: three adults and one of them not behaving like one; Rhiannon asking perfectly sensible questions to a teaching colleague (about his work), and just being ignored. The answers to her questions coming from the secretary who shouldn't really have been getting involved ... it was like being in some sort of dysfunctional family, getting the silent treatment for no apparent reason. No wonder Lisa was being driven mad by it all – the strange behaviour, the lateness of everything that's not

organised, people not taking responsibility, and the consequent demands on her.

Everything used to be very clear cut for the sixth form; but now it's not, the students are aware that things that used to happen are just not happening now – there's a sense of gaps, and unease, insecurity, slippage, things missing. It's like that for the whole school, and it's been like that since Sarah left. She was very efficient, she did her job, she taught effectively: stuff just happened, she made things happen, no flaps, no apologies ... there was a quality of the General about her.

But it wasn't just about the facts of what was done, it was about the way it was done. Sarah held them all together. But since her departure, there'd been a sense of things falling apart, the centre failing to hold. Sarah had loved the school, had taught there for over ten years, and hadn't really wanted to leave: her patience had been pushed to the utter limit by the madness she'd had to contain, and she'd had enough of them all, and that's why she left – but with her gone, there was no one holding the ring, no one containing all the fear and anger, and things were just breaking down.

Discussion

This thesis argues that there are such things as 'psychodynamic incidents in teaching' – moments when psychodynamic phenomena can be seen to be at play in normal schooling processes; Rhiannon's narrative offers one example

of how we might begin to think about what such psychodynamic incidents might be, and how they might be experienced by teachers in schools.

The starting point for a definition of those psychodynamic phenomena was Hinshelwood's list of 'Type 1' or 'Clinical' ideas that are shared across different schools of psychotherapy (outlined earlier on p. 47): resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations and transference/counter-transference. To this list, I have suggested that we can also add containment, attachment, depth therapy, the therapeutic alliance, fantasy and possibly the idea of the unconscious itself, as ideas that are both psychodynamic and widely accepted across the different psychoanalytic traditions. Not all of these phenomena are present in Rhiannon's narrative (the autoethnographic material in Chapters 8 and 9 explore other aspects of psychodynamic phenomena in teaching and learning), but what follows is an amplification of how some of those phenomena appear in the story that we constructed from what she told.

Anxiety

In his 1974 'Defences of the self', Jung's London-based collaborator Michael Fordham offers a summary from a Jungian perspective of psychic defence mechanisms. Noting that the understanding of the defences of the subject are some of the first insights to emerge from the early days of psychoanalysis, Fordham summarised how clinical practitioners learnt early on not to capitulate in the face of denial, and so overcome resistances. In clinical practice, the analyst's rôle is to identify "repressed contents" and

endeavour to make them conscious by following and interpreting the patient's defensive use of symbolisation, displacement, compensation, conversation, reaction formation etc, with a view to making conscious what is unconscious. (Fordham, 1974: 192)

Fordham also lists the more primitive defences against bad objects: “splitting, projection and idealization directed against part or whole objects” and “isolation and undoing” where “the affective element defended against is conscious, but its significance is not accessible because of its isolation from the rest of the personality” (1974: 192-193).

Denial and splitting in response to anxiety; denial and splitting to defend against threats to the subject; denial and splitting in response to the confrontation with mortality; thinking descending into chaos: all these primitive psychic defences seem to suffuse Rhiannon's narrative.

The story begins with a foreboding absence, Tasha's empty chair. It might seem on the one hand absurd or slightly over dramatic to suggest that the empty chair stands as some sort of symbol for mortality (and indeed, Rhiannon was not sure about my psychoanalytic 'association' to this symbol – and the significance I found in the appearance of Lady Macbeth in the story).³⁹ And yet, that part of the story is full of suggestions of death, be that either symbols or actual threats to life and the ego: there are the “weapons”⁴⁰ that Tasha and her friends have allegedly wielded (and the morbid threat of what they intend to do with them), there is the weird presence of Lady Macbeth, the icon of female ruthlessness and madness, and there is the presence – as yet

³⁹ Email exchange 14 Apr 2021.

⁴⁰ In this section of the chapter, double inverted commas around quotations from Rhiannon's narrative indicate that the relevant text is from some part of the narrative above, presented on in the first part of the chapter (rather than to indicate that the quotation in question is Rhiannon's exact words).

only imagined – of the gang: the libidinous youth gang of myth, bent on chaos and destruction; the fantasy expression of the child’s phantasies, symbol of un-boundaried hate and violence.

These anxieties and fantasies threaten to overwhelm parts of the school. The story shows how, from Rhiannon’s perspective, senior teachers struggled to contain the pressures that the circumstances of the school placed on them, with Jane having “had about as much as she can cope with”, Marika’s impetuous response to Jane’s appeal for help that she “can’t deal with this now”, and school leadership described frankly by Rhiannon as “at the top of management, and *incompetent*”. Personified by its senior leadership, the school’s response to the possibility of children in their school armed with knives – whether actual or fantasy – is described flatly as “refusal and denial”. It seems a place where aspects of thinking have become impossible, and are replaced by classically defensive procedural manoeuvres that, in the manner Menzies Leith described happening in other caring professions (Menzies Lyth, 1990 (1959)), guard against a confrontation with the actuality of the threat. The highly systematised and procedural approach of literally ‘splitting’ up the young people involved in this allegation of potential knife crime mirrors the psychic splitting that seems so active in the story. The school engages in acts of ‘holding’ children (isolating them outside senior staff offices) that are the very negation of any sort of conscious containment.⁴¹

The departure of ‘Sarah’ from the senior management team seems to have been a significant event in relation to how difficult emotions and interpersonal tensions were contained: as well as simply being competent and getting things done, Sarah appears to have performed a psychic function. She was a container, a psychic or archetypal mother, and this was a rôle that she supplied

⁴¹ A Jungian approach to containment is outlined above, on pp. 81-83.

for the senior staff at the school, a human being who performed a symbolic function as symbolic object whose psychic function within the constellation of the senior management was “to contain, to take hold of”, whose rôle was to “to remain collected” and demonstrate “composure” (Jung, CW 18: 407). As the narrative observes:

Sarah held them all together. But since her departure, there’d been a sense of things falling apart, the centre failing to hold. Sarah had loved the school, had taught there for over ten years, and hadn’t really wanted to leave: her patience had been pushed to the utter limit by the madness she’d had to contain, and she’d had enough of them all, and that’s why she left – but with her gone, there was no one holding the ring, no one containing all the fear and anger, and things were just breaking down.

It is not surprising that things began to “fall apart” when Sarah left: in circumstances where that function has been previously performed unconsciously by some containing ‘mother’, the loss can be catastrophic. As the senior SAP Jungian analyst, Christine Driver puts it “without the experience of maternal/parental containment and mediation in relation to these affects, they are defended against and become projected objects” (Driver, 2013: 354). Projection seems a feature of the interactions Rhiannon narrates.

That loss of Sarah, who seemed to provide some sort of containment for the split-off contents circulating in senior management, seems to have had major consequences for the individuals in school management, and for the wider school. It is as if – robbed of the containing functions of their psychic mother – the members of the school’s management were living with something like “borderline states of mind” (West, 2016: 44-62) marked by “the so-called primitive mammalian defences which aim to ensure survival and prevent

trauma to the core self – the fight, flight, freeze and collapse responses” (West, 2016: 46). When Rhiannon describes Marika’s “emotional response”, that seemed “to Rhiannon quite strange, really, for a grown-up”, she is indicating an adult who is so distressed, isolated and stressed that her responses fall back on the most primitive mammalian defences. And these defences seem to be active in other teachers – from the weeping Jane to Dave’s paralysed inaction in the face of both minor administrative tasks and high-stakes university entrance processes. When Rhiannon comments at one point that “it was odd to have been in that room: three adults and one of them not behaving like one” she is describing adults whose defences are active, and who are indeed not behaving like adults, because some part of them is thrown back into the unconscious responses of the baby.

In her essay about institutional disagreements within the psychoanalytic profession, the leading Jungian analyst Coline Covington⁴² points out that narcissistic defences can often operate both within individuals and the group, acting “against the impulse to admit failure or weakness or seek help” (Covington, 2005: 38).

Narcissistic defences are notoriously difficult to disassemble. And, like the many-headed hydra, there are always more defences waiting to spring into action. Perhaps what is most problematic about a narcissistic culture – whether it is in the individual or the group – is that it acts against the impulse to admit failure or weakness or to seek help. (Covington, 2005: 38)

Dave, Marika and the absent senior management in Rhiannon’s story all seem caught in the gaze of this many-headed hydra: unable to admit failure or weakness, unable to seek for help, they perform Edward Pajak’s narcissistic

⁴² Editor of the *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 1994-2001.

and “poisonous paedagogy”, exhibiting a determination “to break a child’s will” (Pajak, 2011: 2024), rather than understand and intervene with consciousness in what was undeniably a challenging situation. What occurs in Rhiannon’s story seems to exemplify Tamara Bibby’s comment that “the difficult work of finding ways of thinking and talking non-judgementally about the unconscious aspects of paedagogic relationships [...] does not sit well in the current English policy context” (2009: 51), and the school’s actions are in stark contrast to the sense of loss that Rhiannon articulates, when reflecting on Tasha’s exclusion from parents’ evening – that it was “a great shame; a great shame”. Whilst Rhiannon’s expressed focus is on the child and her paedagogic alliance with her (and the dependent relationship with her family), the school’s administration seems engaged in unthinking and the acting out of primitive, narcissistic defences.

Underlying all of this, there is the question of the degree to which the school can be, or fails to be, a family. It is quite striking that not only was Toby (a junior teacher in the English department) married to Jane, the Head of Year 10, but that for Rhiannon, “Toby was her ‘Boy’” – creating a sense that Rhiannon took some pleasure in the rôle of ‘materfamilias’ (to the adult staff, at least). And whilst Rhiannon’s narrative is woven with an account which foregrounds an ethic of professional efficiency and attention to the learning needs of the young people in her care, there is a striking sense in which those adults in the story without power are infantilised, made into children, by the acts of management and those with power: decisions are not communicated, and important knowledge is withheld. If the school were in any way a family, it appears to be one with avoidant or ambivalent attachment.

Psychodynamic Incidents⁴³

I suggest that the story that Rhiannon told me, which I shaped with her into the narrative above, is shot through with ‘psychodynamic incidents’. In doing so, I am borrowing David Tripp’s idea of *Critical Incidents in Teaching* (Tripp, 1993 (2003)) but adjusting it in a particular way. Tripp offers the following definition of a ‘critical incident’ in teaching:

The vast majority of critical incidents [...] are not at all dramatic or obvious: they are mostly straightforward accounts of very commonplace events that occur in routine professional practice which are critical in the rather different sense that they are indicative of underlying trends, motives and structures. These incidents appear to be ‘typical’ rather than ‘critical’ at first sight, but are rendered critical through analysis. (Tripp, 1993 (2003): 24-25)

The incidents that Rhiannon told do not exactly fit Tripp’s description of critical incidents as being ‘straightforward’ or ‘routine’, rendered ‘critical’ only by the process of thinking about them. The incidents in Rhiannon’s story are laden with emotional charge, and have a numinous quality (think of the image of Jane, near to tears, or of the empty seat that was normally occupied by Tasha): they are inherently memorable because of the relational and psychological charge around the events. They are, to quote Jung, “feeling toned”, and are at the centre of a “*feeling toned complex of ideas*”; they point, in short, to complexes (CW 2: 733-34).

In this regard, I disagree with Tripp, and argue that

⁴³ See Hogan, A. (2019) ‘Psychodynamic incidents in teaching: Researching relational aspects of classroom practice’, *London Review of Education*, 17(3), pp. 284-296.

these events don't come into being simply because they are thought about: psychodynamic incidents have distinct identities because of their psychological and emotive force. We can, however, only notice them when we create the space to bring them to consciousness. (Hogan, 2019: 294)

Another aspect that makes these incidents 'psychodynamic' is the manner in which the events point to underlying *psychodynamic* motives and structures, which become clearer when they are brought to consciousness. Rhiannon's story didn't emerge by accident, but because of the methodological and ethical frame of the research project, and our extended conversations (described in Chapter 5, pp. 177-208) about the nature of the inquiry and my interest in clinical psychodynamic phenomena. She told me a story shot through with numinous psychodynamic incidents because those were the sorts of stories I'd asked her to tell me. Though the question which was to prove to be the final cue that brought forth Rhiannon's story was very much an open-ended, almost unstructured one, it was said within the context of our relationship, and within the frame of a shared, constructed understanding about the nature of the research question, including my amplifications and associations to her material based on clinical theory. In that regard, I argue also that psychodynamic incidents – though actualities and experienced in the lived practice of teachers – may only come to light when one goes looking for them: and it would also appear that to find them requires some investment in training and understanding of the clinical processes involved to create the necessary methodological and ethical frame (cf pp. 162-171).

Possible Jungian Associations

The focus on the psychodynamic that is the basis of the preceding discussion (and the thesis) is because such a position embraces language and theory about interpersonal interactions that is broadly shared by the different psychotherapeutic traditions: resistance, defence against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, transference/counter-transference, containment, attachment, depth therapy, the therapeutic alliance, fantasy (and possibly the idea of the unconscious itself). By focusing on the psychodynamic, my hope has been to draw on a theoretical base that is mutually understood by different psychoanalytic traditions, allowing constructive professional use by teachers of what might be considered shared knowledge about the unconscious (as opposed to pursuing particular theoretical models that might provoke contention, and obscure the lived experience). For the sake of internal consistency (and to demonstrate how these ideas sit within Jungian approaches to the unconscious), my references in the discussion section above have drawn on Jung and Jungian writers and analysts. However, I am confident that it would have been equally possible to present an analysis of the psychodynamic aspects of Rhiannon's story that drew on the literature from a range of other psychoanalytic traditions: the psychodynamic focus attends to the territory that is *shared* across the different theoretical models.

Nonetheless, the story Rhiannon told does evoke in me some very specific and particularly Jungian associations: to the *animus* and *anima*, to the idea of the *puer aeterna* and to the Shadow.

First, the *anima* and *animus*. A traditional Jungian might look at the striking behaviour of 'Marika' and 'Dave' and wonder about how unintegrated 'contra-sexual' aspects of their personalities might be in play, how each might

be under the influence of their respective *animus* and *anima* (ideas introduced on p. 92, above).

In her section in *Man and His Symbols* (Jung, 1964), Jung's key collaborator, Marie-Louise Von Franz, provided a very influential definition of both the archetype of the *anima* and the *animus*. Summarising and amplifying Jung's writing on the idea, she suggests that the *anima* is the personification of the rejected non-masculine aspects of a man's psyche "vague feelings and moods, prophetic hunches, receptiveness to the irrational, capacity for personal love, feeling for nature, and [...] his relation to the unconscious" (von Franz, 1964: 177). In parallel, the rejected, non-feminine aspects of the woman are suggested to be personified in a female's *animus*, visible in boorish behaviour on a woman's part, when something is "preached with a loud, insistent, masculine voice or imposed on others by means of brutal emotional scenes" or alternatively when a woman exhibits behaviours that we currently still characterise as masculine "hard, inexorable power" or when we meet "something in a woman that is obstinate, cold and completely inaccessible" (von Franz, 1964: 189). A traditional Jungian might well read the raging of Marika, and her brutally emotional management style and performance of hard and inexorable power, and wonder about her *animus* ... that same traditional Jungian might look at Dave's vagueness, moodiness and irrationality, and wonder about his *anima*.

I realise that this aspect of Jung's writing (and how his followers have operationalised it) opens up a whole discussion of gender theory that I neither possess the expertise nor the space to pursue. The language – and the implied binary gender model – will be problematic for many readers, but the core of the idea is still useful: we all have very complex gendered identities – denial of those aspects of our gender that do not fit what we think we are (or how we are gendered) brings particular problems:

Both these archetypes, as practical experience shows, possess a fatality that can on occasion produce tragic results. They are quite literally the father and mother of all the disastrous entanglements of fate. (CW 9ii: 41)

Then there is the suggestion in some of the teachers' behaviour of the archetype of the *puer aeternus* – the eternal child. This Jungian archetype was articulated by Marie-Louise von Franz in her lecture series *The Problem of the Puer Aeternus* (von Franz, 1980 [2000]), again building on and amplifying Jung's ideas. The manner in which certain characters in Rhiannon's story avoid responsibility, or exhibit child-like behaviour when required to complete dull, routine work fits von Franz's description of the *puer aeternus* (von Franz, 1980 [2000]: 10). Another interesting aspect of which (as articulated by von Franz) is that the avoidance of dull work is accompanied by a "hero persona" (von Franz, 1980 [2000]: 165): this generates for me an association with that archetype of the heroic teacher that is so attractive and so powerful in our culture (one thinks of *Dead Poets' Society* or *Dangerous Minds*) – charismatic teachers, heroic, attractive to young and old, and yet somehow childlike.

The final Jungian association I would like to offer on the back of Rhiannon's story is to 'the shadow'. The idea of the shadow provides a possible Jungian nuance to the analysis above of how primitive defences seem to have been activated in the incident described in Rhiannon's story. As noted in Part I (p. 87), in analytical psychology, the shadow is "the thing [which one] has no wish to be" (Jung, CW 16: 470), it is "a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality", being composed of the "repressed", "dark aspects of the personality" (Jung, CW 9ii: 14). I have no intention to underestimate the seriousness of the issue that the school was having to address in Rhiannon's story, nor to suggest that the events described were only driven by fantasy,

but the emotional quality of the teachers' reactions to the risk-taking behaviour of the young people in question is quite striking, and seems to reveal something other than simply an appropriate level of pastoral concern and action. The reaction was (as already noted) 'feeling toned' – and possibly not an adequate response to the circumstances⁴⁴ – and that implies some sort of complex was active. I suggest that for some of the key teachers in Rhiannon's story, the young people came to represent projected aspects of their own shadows: the unruly, violent female that could not be tolerated as part of their own personality, but is split off into the shadow, only to surface *because* of the very power invested in it by its denial and repression. Furthermore, it seems to me that some schools may be at more risk than others of triggering such shadow projections. Schools do have a tendency to idealise certain behaviours, to hold up for regard the imagined perfect learner (it might even be considered good practice to offer such 'rôle models'). But it may be that in so doing, a kind of *persona* or "mask of the actor" is held up to cover the real "face we never show to the world" (Jung, CW 9i: 43). An unintended consequence of such idealisation is the risk of splitting off into the shadows innumerable aspects of the real pupils in the school, where those contents will lurk until incidents such as the one in Rhiannon's story bring them to life.

Insights from America

The issues that emerged in Rhiannon's narrative are not unique to that context. Two schools (both in the USA) are on record as having

⁴⁴ Senior teachers with whom I have shared this data have expressed concern at the apparent failure to comply with safeguarding practices in the description of events.

experimented with bringing psychoanalysis inside the school walls to address tensions such as those that emerged in Rhiannon's story. Drawing on the long tradition of Freud, Anna Freud and Bion, Stephen Kerzner (Kerzner, 2009), along with Jonathan Cohen and colleagues (Cohen, 2009; Cohen and Hamilton, 2009; D'Auria and King, 2009), developed a method they termed 'psychoanalytic consultation' in which psychoanalysis is systematically used to assist schools in addressing particular issues and concerns. The model used is based on one developed in 1999 by Kerzner in Noble and Greenough School, Dedham, Massachusetts. There, the psychoanalytic element was not embedded in the training or professional habitus of the teaching practitioner but brought *into* the school through the agency of a consultant. The model is described as follows:

The psychoanalytic consultation model usually involves a psychoanalyst or other psychodynamically oriented clinician meeting for consultation with teachers, administrators, and/or counsellors in a school on a regular basis. The consultant may meet with designated staff either one-to-one, in a group, or both. Such meetings provide a safe and confidential space for educators to talk about the issues that they are struggling with in their school. [...]

When school staff meet with a psychoanalytic consultant, they are encouraged to acknowledge and bear their feelings of frustration, despair, helplessness, and anger in constructive ways. The consultant works psychoanalytically with educators to elucidate the meanings of their and others' behaviour and feelings that may be either accessible or outside awareness. This approach is also applied to the recognition, understanding, and management of systemic issues in the school community. With deepening insight and perspective, problems with individual students and/or parents as well as concerns about faculty can

be addressed calmly and with compassion. In addition, tensions and conflict that threaten a healthy school climate may first be identified and then resolved. The process of psychoanalytic consultation heightens psychological awareness, decreases anxiety, and enhances creative problem solving in faculty, counsellors, and administrators who participate. (Kerzner, 2009: 117-118)

Cohen describes how these psychoanalytic processes add a layer of the “intrapsychic and interpersonal” to the life of the school (Cohen, 2009: 101) which, Kerzner points out, complements the existing state-implemented curriculum of Social, Emotional, Ethical and Academic Education (known in the US as SEEAE, and broadly analogous to what in the UK is sometimes called the ‘Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning’ (SEAL)). What this process also highlights, is that psychodynamic clinical processes are in general *excluded* from social and emotional education curricula and need to be added in the shape of consultants. This absence might help explain the patchy quality of SEAL interventions in the UK (Humphrey, Lendrum and Wigelsworth, 2010) – that is to say, it might be that SEAL interventions don’t engage with the reality of the psychodynamic in teaching, and can act as defences against anxiety, rather than be a process that engages with repressed emotions in an attempt to bring them to consciousness.

Applying psychoanalytic thinking to ‘normal’ events in school – noticing what might be psychodynamic incidents in teaching and learning – can have transformative results. Kerzner (2009), along with Jonathan Cohen and colleagues (Cohen, 2009; Cohen and Hamilton, 2009; D’Auria and King, 2009), describes how psychoanalytic consultation in a specific case helped an all-ages school in New York address a range of ‘whole school issues’

(specifically, drug and alcohol use in the 8th Grade⁴⁵ and bullying among both pupils and staff). Take, for example, the incident Cohen and Hamilton consider, of a 13 year-old girl subjected to sexualised “teasing” who is reported to have drunk significant quantities of vodka off-site on a Saturday evening:

The drinking episode and teasing endured by the eighth grader causes us to wonder if the school’s instructional and systemic supports that are available to students are meeting her developmental needs. We wonder if the student believes that she has an adult advocate within the school community. The fact that she disclosed the problem about bullying to her parents may indicate that she has a trusting relationship with her parents. It also bodes well that the principal responded to the parent’s concern and met with the eighth grader and the boys involved in the incident(s). From this we are unable to determine the nature and quality of her peer and adult relationships. What are the history and nature of her relationships with peers in general and the kids who were apparently teasing/bullying her? Was this “sexual teasing” a onetime instance or part of an ongoing pattern? Was this teasing something that initially began as friendly banter and then “morphed” into something that may still have felt like “fooling around” in a good-hearted way to the boys but not to the girl? Or, was this an instance or ongoing process of the boys being mean and intentionally hurtful to the girl? Does the girl feel known and cared for by the adults within her school? Does she feel emotionally and physically safe? We understand that there is much more information that needs to be gathered from this girl and those adults in relation to her to be able to consider – clinically as well as systemically –

⁴⁵ That is to say, age 13-14, or Year 9 in England.

how to address the needs of this student. (Cohen and Hamilton, 2009: 109)

What happened in this case of the 8th grader and the vodka was that the involvement of psychoanalytic professionals drew out the psychodynamic qualities of the incident, raising questions about the wider relationships in the school. The narrative written with Rhiannon draws out what I suggest can be considered the psychodynamic aspects of the actual events. It seems appropriate to add also that the degree to which ‘Tasha’s’ actions are described as having precipitated a fragmentation in the teacher body suggests that psychoanalytic consultation or something comparable might have proved useful for Rhiannon’s school.

What the co-authored method that I have used here achieves is a method of deepening individual teachers’ understanding of the psychodynamic aspects of their rôle and normal teaching; it offers an operationalizable method for responding to Edward Pajak’s call for teachers to reject remaining part of a narcissistic system and support urgent, change which “must begin from within oneself” (Pajak, 2011: 2038) – with Pajak’s call spoken to the individual teacher because it may prove unlikely to come from elsewhere. This call for teachers to engage in personal psychoanalytic inquiry connects with Britzman and Pitt’s assertion that teachers are under an “ethical obligation” to “learn about their own conflicts and to control the re-enactment of old conflicts that appear in the guise of new paedagogical encounters” (Britzman and Pitt, 1996: 118). Psychoanalytic knowledge confronts both the system and the individual teacher, offering new ways of thinking, new ways of learning, new ways of being – and yet is so often greeted with rejection or denial.

Conclusion

Rhiannon's narrative has, I hope, shown how a number of psychodynamic aspects were at play in the school she was working in. In the analysis above, I have tried to highlight how denial, defences against anxiety, fantasy and containment can be seen in the striking story of 'Tasha' and the allegation surrounding her and her friends' use of knives.

It was the first such co-authored narrative that I was able to write with another teacher, and circumstances meant that it proved to be the only one written for this project. As the 'first of its class' there is a slight feeling that the writing is devised and provisional – my technique as a collaborator was perhaps under-developed, and would likely have improved with more practice of the process.

Crucially, this is Rhiannon's story. I helped it take the form that it finally took, but the narrative that I co-wrote with her – framed by the methodological and psychoanalytically-informed process I offered her – is in essence the story that she wished to tell, and also one I very much wanted to hear. In consequence, the analysis can only draw out issues that were pertinent to Rhiannon's school, and teachers from other schools would have brought other material. My hope is that a collection of co-authored narratives exploring the themes of psychodynamic incidents in teaching (and learning) would offer a wider spread of material. Having had scoping conversations with other teachers, I see no reason why future co-authored narratives might not engage with other psychodynamic questions in teaching and learning: the affective in teacher-pupil relationships, the relationship between thinking and learning, and the fundamental question of the relationship between care and teaching.

Rhiannon's story is only one of a number that had been planned but were did not get written as part of this project – those stories remain to be told, shaped and written down. Those other narratives would have developed in different ways, with both different stories and different balances constructed between my contributions and those of the other writer – different 'terms of trade', if you like. As this particular project developed, I was given the opportunity to make use of autoethnography as a means to explore the questions central to the study, and this is the focus of the next part of the thesis.

Chapter 7 addresses autoethnographic method, methodology and ethics; Chapter 8 presents some autoethnographic material exploring psychodynamic incidents in my teaching career; and Chapter 9 looks at my own interior psychology, exploring how my learning process has generated psychodynamic incidents which, whilst subjective, can be shown to fit psychoanalytic clinical theories, and to be intimately bound up with my identity as a teacher.

This Chapter 6 and the preceding Chapter 5 (Part II of the thesis) has shown how co-authorship can be used to write about psychodynamic incidents in teaching with other teachers, teachers who may be less engaged with psychoanalytic theories and clinical practice. The next part explores how a particular teacher's subjective experience can also be considered to present evidence of such psychodynamic incidents.

PART III:
AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Chapter 7

Autoethnography

Introduction

Part I of this thesis provided a survey of the ideas and issues that are the focus of the study: this included a literature review, a survey of the history of psychoanalysis and a chapter on methodology and ethics. The literature reviews looked at Jungian psychoanalytic theory, psychodynamic approaches to the ideas that emerge from clinical practice, and the history of the relationship of these ideas and phenomena with education and teaching. The final chapter in Part I was a consideration of methodology and ethics, looking at the general questions that arose in a study of this kind. Part II focused on the co-authored elements of the thesis, and contained two chapters, one looking at co-authorship, methods and the second presenting a co-authored narrative and an analysis of that material. Part III presents the autoethnographic material.

This Chapter 7 explores the methods and ethics of autoethnography, providing an introduction to Chapters 8 and 9. Chapter 8 takes as starting points the ethnographic events of receipt by me of emails from former pupils in the period 2013-16, and uses them to explore how incidents recalled from my time as a schoolteacher can be understood using psychodynamic and psychoanalytic thinking. Chapter 9 looks at a series of 'interior events',

associated with my experiences in didactic analysis (described in Part I), and what these reveal about my experience of being a teacher.

History

“There is no comprehensive history of autoethnography”, write two of its most prominent proponents, Carolyn Ellis and Art Bochner, in a recent book on the subject (2016). The term ‘autoethnography’ appears first to have emerged in the academic literature in the 1960s and 1970s. In his Presidential Address to the 75th Anniversary Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in 1976, Walter Goldschmidt offered a “brief autoethnography” of anthropology itself (Goldschmidt, 1977). Goldschmidt’s use of ‘autoethnography’ appears to have been somewhat tongue-in-cheek, with the term actually appearing only the once in the body of the text, and his talk and subsequent article offering less what we would now recognise as autoethnography than a meta-study of anthropology (a historiography of the developments in ethnographic methods through the middle of the twentieth century). David Hayano, in ‘Auto-Ethnography: Paradigms, Problems, and Prospects’, (1979: 99) reports first hearing ‘auto-ethnography’ “in Sir Raymond Firth’s structuralism seminar in 1966 at the London School of Economics”, but lists a small number of anthropological studies from the 1950s and ‘60s that were in his view auto-ethnographic accounts, *avant la lettre*. Leon Anderson makes a similar point, arguing that “there has always been an autoethnographic element in qualitative sociological research”, citing examples from the 1920s, ‘40s, ‘50s and ‘60s, and emphasising that autobiographical method was part of the method of the Chicago school of ethnography (Anderson, 2006a: 375).

This emergent nature of the term and the concept of ‘auto-ethnography’ in the 1970s is indicated by Karl Heider’s use of it in his ‘What Do People Do? Dani Auto-Ethnography’ (1975); this presents as auto-ethnography the results of a questionnaire of “sixty Grand Valley Dani schoolchildren [who] each gave 50 responses to the question ‘what do people do?’ This is called a Dani auto-ethnography”; autoethnography in this sense is self-consciously “autochthonous”⁴⁶ ethnography (p. 3). David Hayano acknowledged this use of the term by Heider, but chose instead to define autoethnography as

(1) how anthropologists conduct and write ethnographies of their ‘own people’; (2) the problems of methodology and theory associated with this approach; and (3) whether anthropology can profit from these exercises. (Hayano, 1979: 99)

Hayano also acknowledged the breadth of form and use to which that emergent autoethnography was being put. Autoethnography at that point included “a wide range of studies”, in a wide range of disciplines beyond anthropology, and incorporated “the works of other social scientists who have done intensive participant-observation research in natural field settings” (p. 99).

It would appear, then, that in this early use of the term ‘autoethnography’ was conceived as a variation of participant observation, but one made distinctive by the quality of the ethnographer’s established membership of the group studied. Thus, Hayano is able to divide autoethnographers between those who had “master status [...] who have studied their own cultural, social, ethnic, racial, religious, residential, or sex membership group”, and those “who have acquired an intimate familiarity with a certain subcultural, recreational, or occupational group” (Hayano, 1979: 100). But it will be clear

⁴⁶ Native, indigenous, found where it originates (from biology).

from this description, that this mode of ‘autoethnography’ was methodologically firmly located within conventional modernist assumptions in anthropology and ethnographic method (and for some writers, even more specifically, within the symbolic interactionist theoretical framework of the Chicago School). Indeed, it was possible for Hayano to assert that

many auto-ethnographers comment on the need to make a clear rôle distinction between scientist-ethnographer and native group member in order to maintain a sense of emotional and social detachment and value neutrality. (Hayano, 1979: 102)

In Hayano’s view, however, this ‘scientific’ approach to autoethnography did not negate the potential for “paradigm shifts” in method and methodology; and back in 1979, there was the prospect of autoethnographic method offering

(1) [...] entirely new theories, concepts, and methods derived from other possible epistemologies; (2) emic⁴⁷ or subjectively oriented data analysis, incorporating techniques and theories adapted from other disciplines; and (3) applied, action, or radical anthropology emphasizing the practical uses of anthropology in support of one’s own people and, therefore, of oneself. (Hayano, 1979: 101)

In 1994, the first edition of the Denzin and Lincoln’s *Handbook of Qualitative Research* included one reference to autoethnography:

Postmodern, cultural studies feminists merge their work with the postmodern, ethnographic turn in anthropology [...] while exploring autoethnography and other new writing forms. (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994: 101)

⁴⁷ From within the social group (but from the perspective of the subject); in contrast to the *etic* approach, from outside (from the perspective of the observer).

Denzin and Lincoln noted that this then new approach drew “on the critical and constructivist paradigms, especially in a commitment to relativism”, and linked its emergence to feminist concerns with “making live experience central to qualitative inquiry and developing criteria of evaluation based on ethics of caring, personal responsibility, and open dialogue” (p. 102). The gradually increasing interest and significance of autoethnography is reflected in the observation that the 2nd Edition of the same *Handbook of Qualitative Research* contained a full chapter written by Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner (Ellis and Bochner, 2000), while the 5th Edition contains numerous sections on autoethnography, with some 75 references to the subject in the whole book (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018)).

For Kitrina Douglas and David Carless in their ‘A History of Autoethnographic Inquiry’ (2013: 88), Arthur Bochner’s essay ‘It’s About Time – Narrative and the Divided Self’ (1997) is a key moment in the emergence of a different kind of autoethnography (one that might be more recognisable as such to contemporary readers). Bochner’s essay is a memoir in which he confronts the irony that his social scientist’s interest in death and dying had (to use psychoanalytic terms that Bochner does not) defended against the experience of death and loss until presented with the event of his father’s death. This subjective “*personal experience*”, fills that space that Douglas and Carless characterise as the “*something that is missing*” in otherwise entirely theoretical accounts –an experience that is critical because it “challenges theories, categories and interpretations” (Douglas and Carless, 2013: 88). Bochner’s recognition was that

the research literature offered me data, labels, categories, and theoretical explanations, but it didn’t express how loss felt and it didn’t invite engagement with the particularities of the experience. (Bochner, 1997: 424)

In the late 1990s, when Arthur Bochner authored that article, what was thus emerging was clarity within the anthropological and ethnographic community that it might be possible to recognise two distinct modes of autoethnography: one (a standard anthropological approach) concerned with generating data that can have some sort of defensible status as ‘evidence’ of some ‘real world’ experiences; the other focused rather on subjective experience, the depth of the emotional experience, and concerned with taking the reader on an evocative journey through those emotions. It is relevant to note that the emergence of this second mode happened to coincide with the ‘narrative turn’ and during a period in which post-modern scepticism about claims to truth and objectivity was growing within academic practices.

This conceptualisation of two different modes of autoethnography (something one might want to characterise as a ‘split’) became clarified in a special edition of the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* in August 2006, composed of nine articles which engaged with this existential question. These were framed by Leon Anderson’s articulation of “Analytic Autoethnography” (2006a), in which he made a defence of an “autoethnography in the realist or analytic tradition” (p. 376) in contradistinction to ‘evocative’ or ‘emotional’ autoethnography. Whilst he has since then nuanced his views (Anderson and Glass-Coffin, 2013), it is worth unpacking the debate around the distinction between ‘analytic’ and ‘evocative/emotional’ autoethnography: the terms still have currency – as exemplified in Andrew Sparkes’ recent characterisation of autoethnography as grouped around the analytic, the evocative and the performative (2021: 265-267) – and their use illuminates some methodological debates that are relevant to this thesis.

In that 2006 article in which he coins the term, Anderson proposes five key features of analytic autoethnography that were intended to differentiate it from ‘evocative autoethnography’, and suggested the advantages and the most

obvious limitations of evocative autoethnography, locating it epistemologically within what he calls “traditional symbolic interactionism” (p. 374). Those five key features are

(1) complete member researcher (CMR) status, (2) analytic reflexivity, (3) narrative visibility of the researcher’s self, (4) dialogue with informants beyond the self, and (5) commitment to theoretical analysis. (p. 378)

Or,

Put most simply, analytic autoethnography refers to ethnographic work in which the researcher is (1) a full member in the research group or setting, (2) visible as such a member in the researcher’s published texts, and (3) committed to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena. (p. 375)

Anderson’s requirement for ‘Complete Member Researcher’ status is not without problems, as he points out. Such a participant researcher is always something ‘other’, given their identity that is partly ‘outside’ the group (in their other role an academic or a researcher), this being a status that points outwards in some way, creating relationships that are outside the group. In addition, the simple ethnographic requirement to take notes, make records and capture evidence of one’s life in the group is inherently distracting, potentially narrowing, and – one might add – often not part of the behaviour of the groups studied, and thus potentially both confines the field of study and sets one apart from being a ‘typical’ member of the group (p. 380). Related to this are the ethical and methodological questions that arise from participant observation: data construction is inherently ethically problematic in such circumstances, because of the question of the purpose and intent of one’s participation, the related issue of the legitimacy of creating data based on

privileged access, and the question of the informed consent of other participants (p. 381). Furthermore, just being a member of a group doesn't mean that the data that one constructs are representative, given that there are diversities within groups (p. 381): the analytic autoethnographer within a group has a distinctive identity, in which reflexivity is central and defining.

There is a quality of manifesto here, as much as the authoring of a critical analytical assessment. Anderson's essay includes the call that "autoethnographers should illustrate analytic insights through recounting their own experiences and thoughts as well as those of others" and be "involved in the construction of meaning and values in the social worlds they investigate" (p. 384), and conform to "the ethnographic imperative" to understand complex social worlds of which we are only part, but a part nevertheless (2006a, p. 386), to generalise and build theories. All of this means that here is a suggestion that (for *some* analytic autoethnographers at least) analytic autoethnography is the proper sort of autoethnography. Notwithstanding Anderson's assertion elsewhere in the special edition of *Contemporary Ethnography* that he is a "friend of evocative autoethnography" (Anderson, 2006b: 452), the sense of oppositionality (and the language of deficit with respect to the 'other' position) is at times quite striking:

unlike evocative autoethnography, which seeks narrative fidelity only to the researcher's subjective experience, analytic autoethnography is grounded in self-experience but reaches beyond it as well. (Anderson, 2006a, p. 386)

And again:

analytic ethnographers are not content with accomplishing the representational task of capturing 'what is going on' in an individual life or social environment. This distinguishes analytic ethnography from

evocative ethnography and similar first-person narratives, such as the autobiographical ‘creative non-fiction’ that is highly popular today in creative writing programmes around the United States. (Anderson, 2006a, p. 387)

On the other side of the distinction, ‘evocative’ autoethnographers seem prepared to defend their ground with equal vigour. In a clear echo of Anderson’s 2006 language, Arthur Bochner, writing in 2016, somewhat ahead of Anderson’s more nuanced 2013 summary, appears to have had the analytical autoethnographers in mind when he described autoethnography as something that

unnerved those traditional, analytic social scientists who insisted on clinging to objectivity, detachment, theory-building, and generalisation as terminal goals of scientific inquiry. (Bochner and Ellis, 2016: 45)

That is to say, for Bochner and Ellis, it would appear that *proper* autoethnography is *not* analytic; proper autoethnography is evocative, and appeals to a radically subjective form of knowledge, freed from a need to reference particular *grandes narratives* or theories: and because of this epistemological perspective that they take (reinforcing the distinction of approaches of the two schools), for the evocative writers, it is *their* approach that is the correct form of autoethnography.

Critical Realist Autoethnography

My methodological perspective is not the radically relativist one that fits with most authors of evocative autoethnography: my approach (as outlined above)

is informed by Critical Realism and belief in a depth ontology characterised by a relativist epistemology and a realist ontology, seeing autoethnography as a method, not a methodology. This does not entirely accord with the location of autoethnography as being “between epistemology and ontology; between facts and meanings” (Bochner and Ellis, 2016: 66). So, if not evocative ethnography, to what degree does the work that I have undertaken meet Anderson’s criteria, so as to be described as ‘analytic autoethnography’?

Anderson’s original five defining elements of analytic autoethnography (listed above) are complete member researcher status, analytic reflexivity, narrative visibility of the researcher’s self, dialogue with informants beyond the self, and a commitment to theoretical analysis. In many respects, the work I offer below fits several of those criteria, in its analytic reflexivity, the narrative visibility of my self, and the engagement with theoretical analysis. However, some aspects are missing: there is no complete member researcher status (or that status is ambiguous, with the locus of the research moving in time and place), and there is (at least in the autoethnographic material offered in Chapters 8 and 9) no dialogue with informants beyond the self. Also, the material offered below was generated in a mode different to conventional ethnographic method: no field notes were maintained while I was teaching between 2000 and 2008 to capture the stories that are told in Chapters 8 and 9; and the correspondence which provides the ethnographic data was written in 2014, ‘15 and ‘16 – that is to say, somewhat after the events described in the chapters concerned. Nonetheless, this use of memoir conforms with other autoethnographic practice, such as Ronald Pelias’ use of it to explore his struggles to unpick the relationship between performance and criticism (2013: 385-389). In that example, Pelias’ writing is *both* evocative and analytical, driven less by a desire to conform to particular autoethnographic manifestos than a quest for a mode of production that can meet a research concern that is

both creative and methodological: this is what autoethnography is – it contains a “variety of genres” that mirror the “profusion” of autoethnographic perspectives (Douglas and Carless, 2013: 98).

Furthermore, the writing from me presented below, which some readers might consider analytic, has many resonances with evocative ethnography: Chapter 8 looks at relationships in my teaching career, and aims to evoke some of the inter-subjective experiences from that period of my life; Chapter 9 explores interior psychology and also touches on moments of crisis and psychic distress. This sort of material is the core interest of evocative (‘emotional’) autoethnography. Moreover, I find the creative affordances of the mode attractive, and have been impressed by the literary and novelistic qualities of evocative autoethnography such as Ruth Behar’s *The Vulnerable Observer* (1996) and Carolyn Ellis’ *The Ethnographic I* (2004). The co-authored narrative experiment in Chapter 6 very much fits this form of “autobiographical ‘creative non-fiction’” that Anderson seems to disparage in his 2006 article (2006a, p. 387) – though, of course, it is co-authored, and not autoethnographic. However, the appeal to me of that form of writing lies not just in my training in literary studies, but because such narratives (when told well) are accessible and afford an opportunity to engage a wider audience in the otherwise rather abstruse and inaccessible ideas of – in my case – Jungian psychology and the arguments of the applicability of psychodynamic thought to teaching and learning. In other words, the appeal for me of the narrative form of evocative autoethnography is because of the possibility of deploying it for activist and analytical autoethnographic purposes, “not in terms of self-absorption, but rather [...] to inform and change social knowledge” (Davies (1999, 184), cited in Anderson, 2006a: 386): evocative autoethnographic form used to analytical autoethnographic purpose.

So, acknowledging Sparkes' cautions about the "danger of lists" and their "thwarting, halting quality" (Sparkes, 2021: 267), I suggest that the work offered in Chapters 7 and 8 straddles both agendas – having aspect of both the analytical and the evocative.

Questioning the Split

In any case, one should ask how stable is the distinction between 'analysis' on the one hand, and 'emotions' on the other? In making the case for analytic autoethnography, Anderson's 2006 article cites the example of *The Body Silent* (1987) by cultural anthropologist Robert Murphy, a study of the long subjective experience of suffering and alienation resulting from neurological disease, but which differs from the 'evocative' or 'emotional approach' in its efforts to make connections to broader social science theory. Anderson argues that through deploying his own experiences as evidence, "Murphy forcefully demonstrates that deeply personal and self-observant ethnography can rise above idiographic particularity to address broader theoretical issues" (pp. 378-9). Murphy's text uses the occasion of his paraplegia to make observations about systemic or theoretical issues – it is therefore shot-through with what one might call 'hyper-analytical' statements such as "we owe a great deal of our understanding of ritual to Arnold van Gannep and Émil Durkheim" (Murphy, 1987 (1990): 131), or "state laws commonly protect the handicapped from job discrimination" (p. 147), and "in addition to the structural differences between race and handicap, a different scale of values and emotional responses applies to the disabled" (p. 130): fragments of communication that brand the thinking as self-consciously analytic. These formal markers of the analytic are interwoven with the personal insights

proper to a subjective autoethnography such as “my first two weeks in the hospital were spent taking tests” and “the laboratory had a Draculan appetite for my blood” (p. 35), or “as I lay flat on my back on the mat, the therapist held one of my legs by the foot and knee, and pushed my thigh against my trunk, and told me to push back until my leg was extended again” (p. 50). Nonetheless, the analytical style in the form of writing adopted by Murphy is qualitatively different to that of someone like Ruth Behar. Behar’s *The Vulnerable Observer* (1996) is written in a significantly more novelistic style, with sentences such as “Polonia’s mother not only foresaw but staged her own death” (p. 49), and “after the accident, my childhood ended” (p. 105), or “the room was packed. All the available seats were taken and there were people standing in the back” (p. 17) – but which nonetheless also engages with theoretical and political issues (including racism (pp. 90-103, 116, 128), cultural attitudes to death (pp. 17, 34-89), and genderisation, disability and the body (pp. 17, 104-135)) – the whole book itself being an extended reflective analysis of what it is to ‘do’ anthropology, to be a ‘vulnerable observer’.

It is, however, important to note that by 2013, Anderson recognised that his 2006 description of a binary divide between the evocative and the analytic “fell prey” to being “overly intellectualized and reified” (Anderson and Glass-Coffin, 2013: 58). That recognition is important, because to those familiar with psychoanalytic thought and practice, creating an opposition between ‘analysis’ and ‘emotion’ is problematic, and risks enacting a psychic split. It is clear here that there are qualitative differences to be explored, and that there are methodological distinctions between the two approaches. However, it is also the case that there is theory that underpins evocative writing (and to which it often repeatedly refers) just as there is a subjective emotional quality in ‘analytic’ autoethnography (a quality that emerges out of the very fact of it

being autoethnography). Some autoethnographies foreground one aspect more than the other; some are more readable than others. Notwithstanding the fact that contemporary autoethnography affords the possibility of being “personal and academic [...] scientific *and* spiritual” (Anderson and Glass-Coffin, 2013: 58) – an objective Jung himself would have recognised and approved of – there persist distinctions at the level of epistemology: there is a radical relativism that underpins one approach, and a long history of theory (and specifically symbolic interactionism) that forms the basis of the other.

These distinctions lose a significant amount of their traction when the practice of autoethnography is located within a critical realist methodology (outlined in more detail above, pp. 136-149). The critical realist acceptance that one may only have knowledge of what appears – but that what is observed may refer to underlying structures which are not easily apprehended and may point to transphenomenalist truths – seems to tolerate the dispute between the radically subjective approach of evocative autoethnography on the one hand and the analytical one on the other. Subjective, relativist evocative writing self-consciously and by definition confines itself to the empirical domain of experiences: it may point by inference, implication or abduction to the (critical realist) real domain of systems and mechanisms, but this can only be at the level of theory, and it should not surprise anyone that there is disagreement with analytic autoethnographers about what theories might explain the workings of systems and mechanisms in the transphenomenal domain of the real.

Applying critical realist thought to autoethnographic method suggests that autoethnographic data represent that which can be known at either the empirical level of experiences or the actual level of events, but points to structures that are not easily apprehended, and which operate at a transcendental level: psychoanalytically-informed, critical realist

autoethnography can therefore tolerate doubt about the precise nature of the structures that lie behind the data presented. This is, however, a strikingly under-theorised area, with (at the time of writing) apparently only one other researcher (Alex Stevens of the University of Kent) deploying Critical Realism to support autoethnography. Stevens also was unable to find others using Critical Realism and autoethnography, noting in his ‘The Politics of being an “expert”: A critical realist auto-ethnography of drug policy advisory panels in the UK’ that “I have not found a previous example of auto-ethnography being combined with critical realist theory” (Stevens, 2020/21: 3).

The Echo of Psychoanalysis

To readers familiar with psychoanalytic practices, a text such as Arthur Bochner’s ‘It’s About Time’ (1997, already mentioned), is striking because of the debt that his story appears to owe to psychoanalysis. This is, however, something largely unacknowledged: Bochner makes one reference to Freud (and that via a selected writings edition), but the debt to therapy is deep. In what in other contexts would be treated unambiguously as psychoanalytic clinical material, Bochner shares a memory of abuse: it is a clear, dispassionate description of his father’s disciplinary violence when the 12-year old Bochner returned to the family house late for dinner. After telling this story, Bochner poses the following questions – part of a dialogue with his self that seems profoundly indebted to impact the psychoanalytic movement had on the way we think and talk about our psychopathology:

I opened my eyes and re-entered the present. Why? I ask myself. Why did he do those things? What made him so violent and impulsive?

Where did all that pent-up fury come from? What satisfaction could he possibly have derived from pounding the flesh of a little boy half his size? After all, the fights never really changed anything. I didn't learn any lessons, except perhaps to make promises and tell lies. (Bochner, 1997: 426)

Autoethnography is aware of its own “therapeutic” possibilities (Sikes, 2013: xxvi; Ellis, 2007: 15), foregrounds “dialogism” (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015: 14)), and places emotions at the centre of the epistemological process (ibid. p. 10, quoting Tami Spry). The form has affordances that it could be argued are inherently therapeutic: like Sylvia Plath’s poetry (e.g. *Ariel*, 1965), or autobiographical survivor narratives (such as Bitton-Jackson, 1999), the act of writing creates a dialogue between the conscious (that written into the page) and the unconscious (that which underpins the emergent ideas), in which affective material is processed, brought to light, and understood – this is an inherently therapeutic process, and one that parallels the dialogic process of the consulting room. Hence work such as Bochner’s (cited above), Rambo Ronai’s (1995) and the more recent explicitly “therapeutic autoethnography” of a survivor like that written by Kelsey Railsback (2020).

There are other connections between autoethnography and the history of psychoanalysis. A key feature of autoethnography – the analysis of one’s self – was a foundational technique in both analytical psychology and psychoanalysis. Jung’s *Red Book* (Jung, 2009) is perhaps the most remarkable witness to how founders of the movement looked inside themselves to find the material on which to develop their theories, but it started with Freud. Freud’s early translator, A. A. Brill, writing in 1914, says the following of Freud’s auto-analytic method:

When one wishes to report any auto-analysis he must be prepared to lay bare many intimate affairs of his own life. Anyone reading carefully Professor Freud's works cannot fail to become intimately acquainted with him and his family. [...] Auto-analyses are autobiographies par excellence; but whereas the autobiographer may for definite reasons consciously and unconsciously hide many facts of his life, the auto-analyst not only tells the truth consciously, but perforce brings to light his whole intimate personality. It is for these reasons that one finds it very unpleasant to report his own auto-analyses. However, as we often report our patients' unconscious productions, it is but fair that we should sacrifice ourselves on the altar of publicity when occasion demands. (Brill, 1914: 297-298)

Auto-analysis – a form of writing that is auto-biographical and analytical – has been part of psychoanalytic method since its inception: Carolyn Laubender argues that Freud's "auto-analysis" is a form of "auto theory" in which Freud "proleptically joined the autobiographical to what would become the psychoanalytic" and that psychoanalysis is thus "born of Freud's deconstruction of self-narration; it is a generalizable theory of mind catalyzed by Freud's experiment with autobiography" (Laubender, 2020: 40) – 'auto', 'graphic' and 'analytic' (just like autoethnography).

This is an uneasy relationship (as is that of education and psychoanalysis). For Leon Anderson, mainstream autoethnography rejects psychoanalysis (for which Freud is the icon):

Autoethnography is somewhat unique in research in that it is particularly likely to be warranted by the quest for self-understanding. Some scholars bristle when I say that: it sounds too Freudian to them. But self-understanding does not need to be Freudian, or Rogerian, or new-

age mystical. The kind of self-understanding I am talking about lies at the intersection of biography and society: self-knowledge that comes from understanding our personal lives, identities, and feelings as deeply connected to and in large part constituted by – and in turn helping to constitute – the sociocultural contexts in which we live. (Anderson, 2006a: 390)

The history of ideas in the twentieth century acknowledges the impact of the psychoanalytic movement on philosophy, writing, research practices, and our collective practices of healing. The *Handbook of Autoethnography* (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2013) – 736 pages – contains a short three-page section on Lacan, one other reference to ‘psychoanalysis’, four to ‘psychoanalytic’, and no references to Freud, Jung or Klein. One could argue that psychoanalysis lies for most autoethnographers in the unconscious of the method, and it is indicative that I could find only one published piece of scholarship in which psychoanalytic theory is explicitly linked to autoethnographic writing. This was Dean Garrett’s article ‘Psychoanalytic-Autoethnography: Troubling Natural Bodybuilding’ (2014), in which he uses Kristeva, Lacan and Butler to explore the splits, projections and abjections of the subject that might be at play in the gender and identity performances of body building. One might argue that what is offered below is more profoundly ‘psychoanalytic autoethnography’ than Garrett’s because of the methodological linkage to clinical experiences (and didactic analysis).

Ethical Issues

The material offered in Chapters 7 and 8 was first drafted in a torrent of writing in 2017/18, after a challenging period in this project. It emerged in what might be called a ‘reaction formation’ to the difficulties of constructing psycho-social research methods to capture the psychodynamic material that I wanted to record; it was, therefore, a personally cathartic process – inherently framed by my experiences in psychotherapy – and thus potentially a form of “therapeutic autoethnography” (Railsback, 2020). That therapeutic quality lay partly because of a sense of release from certain methodological constraints, and partly because of the inherently quasi-therapeutic nature of the material (which emerged out of my complex subjective experiences of school teaching, and certain related aspects of my interior life which – it as became clearer in the process of this doctorate – underpinned my identity as a teacher).

The first drafts of the core material that now forms the basis of Chapters 8 and 9 were, therefore, written somewhat before the full consideration both of autoethnography as a method, and a consideration of the ethical issues associated with writing about one’s own life framed by the insights of autoethnography. One of the functions of this section of the thesis is to demonstrate how ethical questions particular to autoethnography have been applied to the data that was created during the thesis. My assumptions about what writing *is* were based on an undergraduate training in literary studies and arts (which has included creative writing), professional formation in teacher education and a familiarity with clinical case studies and self-analysis practices (as modelled by Freud, Klein and Jung, among others) and theatre practice. Each of these modes of writing has different relationships with source material and different ethical principles. Literary writing (notoriously) often seems to have no ethical standards at all, and literary writers freely mine the intimacies

of peoples' lives for material – with consequences, as the novelist Tania Unsworth has described, in reference to her own writing (2020). Teacher educators positively *encourage* reflective writing about schools and children, drawing on foundational practices such as those described by Donald Schön (1983; 1987) and David Tripp (1993 (2003)), where simple anonymisation (now better characterised as pseudonymisation) is the basic ethical standard, and the focus on the writer's professional practice (as opposed to the 'lives of the other') assumed. Clinical case studies are governed by the various practices of the relevant professional bodies, but auto-analysis narratives are the property of the clinicians who wrote them (with the obvious objection that relational material is likely to demand the need to write about other people, one's fantasies about them, and one's projections onto them).

It would be unfair and inaccurate to give the impression that my research had been absent of ethical considerations prior to this point: ethical considerations had suffused the design of the project, delaying its commencement for several years, and leading toward the adoption of the co-authored model (described in Chapters 5 and 6). The later use of what I have come to realise is psychoanalytically-informed, critical realist autoethnography meant that a lot of intimate, relational material re-surfaced in the process of my didactic analysis which – whilst potentially appropriate for inclusion in a novel or drama – could not be legitimately submitted in this thesis because of the ethical issues surrounding the potential harm involved.

One might consider that one hardly needs to consent on behalf of oneself – but the unconscious is at play and so the question arises of how much anyone can ever fully understand their own motives (or consent to processes that might put into the public domain intimacies that it seemed a good idea to confess not so long ago). Consent is in another sense harder because innumerable potentially identifiable individuals now might appear in your

narrative: exactly the sort of risk of objectification that I sought to avoid through the adoption of a reflexive co-authorship method. And I am acutely conscious of Pat Sikes' warning about the risk of "revenge" autoethnography, and the consequences for family, friends and colleagues who might appear in narratives Sikes (2013: xxxvii).

Given the need to explore psychodynamic material, and the etiological nature of psychoanalytic analysis, this project involves inherent risks to living people. I have tried to manage this through the usual standard procedures such as the use of pseudonyms, blurring of some details and the selective non-presentation of data. As regards my relationship with former pupils which I explore in this thesis, I have tried to restrict myself to describing events which either happened in class, in other public spaces around school, or which are already known: private spoken conversations have remained private. Very many stories have not been used. The analysis, therefore (in which the psychodynamic material is brought to consciousness) is of my own, subjective perspectives on known, objective material. This thinking is explained in more detail below.

The Sheffield Guidelines for Autoethnography

In 2015, Sheffield University published a set of guidelines – adapted from Tolich, (2010), Sikes (2010) and (2013) – to assist qualitative researchers in considering the specific ethical concerns that arise in autoethnography (Sikes, 2015). Below, I take those guidelines in turn, and describe how each has been considered or enacted in this project.

Protect the people whose lives are the focus and substance of the research. The process of writing autoethnography that emerges out of depth therapy will generate written material shaped by clinical processes; these psychoanalytic clinical processes engage with the most intimate relationships, and the widest range of associations and fantasies in response to the incidents and events in those relationships – relationships from all or any points in a writer’s life. This is inherently risky.

As noted above, this part of the thesis aims to provide data about my subjective experience of ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching’, and explore in more detail how my own psychology was at play in my life as a teacher. In contrast to the focus of Part II (which was on the experience of another teacher), these three chapters offer my attempts to answer the questions posed about how my psychology – including its potentially problematic elements – was at play in my teaching practice. The main focus of this Part, therefore, is me. However, representations of other people (with one exception, all of them living) feature in this material, in my experiences of teaching and learning relationships (the recollections of which form the focus of Chapter 8), and my experiences of interior psychodynamic incidents (which form the basis of Chapter 9). Chapter 9 was drafted before the other two chapters in this Part, and therefore was the writing which first gave me ethical concern.

Chapter 9 explores the experiential and cognitive insights that emerged in the didactic analysis conducted during the research for this thesis. Because of the psychoanalytic interest (and the inherent nature of ‘relational’ material), representations of a number of biologically close living relatives and my emotional relationships with them entered the writing. This was problematic, because any exploration of the subjective, relational material would inevitably involve writing about fantasies and psychodynamic material concerning

relationships with living people, and whilst what emerged in the process were what one might call ‘home truths’ (or interior events that pointed to controversial actualities and contested realities) they concerned others whom I had no desire or intention to insult, offend or harm. To some degree, I also recognised a duty to protect myself: whilst I am open about my psychology and willing to discuss it and my inner life freely with intimates, I had no particular desire to ‘tattoo’ myself in public and in perpetuity as one thing or another (Tolich, 2010: 1605): one’s understanding of what one *is* changes and develops through life, and one should allow it to do so. Acknowledging this ‘Catch 22’ (how to write for the purposes of public examination about that which cannot spoken of in public), Chapter 9 has been edited for this submission with close attention to the need to protect, and to focus the material tightly on my experiences and the insights that they offer about teaching and learning.

Chapter 8 uses the receipt of four emails from past pupils as starting points from which to generate subjective data based on my experiences in school as a teacher. The following steps have been taken to protect people represented in that writing: pseudonymisation, blurring of details, and the alteration of a number of contextual facts. I am acutely conscious of the limitations to these sorts of measures in protecting people; in this submission the material has been further edited, with the removal of a number of details as additional steps to protect the identities of those represented in it. I have also had this material reviewed again by my supervisor. I have focused on telling stories which are assessed by both of us to be ‘lower risk’, in that the events described which took place in public spaces of the school, classrooms, or which were known about: private spoken conversations have not been used. I have self-edited: many stories have not been told.

Respectfully depict those people. Prior to submission, Chapters 8 and 9 have both been reviewed, keeping in mind the duty to depict those in it with respect; this question has also been the subject of a specific supervision conversation.

Be alert to the potential misuse of interpretational and authorial power. This risk was one of which I was keenly aware from the start of the project, and underlay the design of a co-authored approach which is presented in Part II (co-authorship having built into it a dispersal of authorial power, and the ‘check’ on one’s interpretations provided by the involvement of the other author); autoethnography was adopted opportunistically, late into the study, and at a point at which a lot of data (later reframed as autoethnography) had already been created. Chapters 8 and 9 have, prior to this submission, been re-read and edited with attention to this guideline, and interpretations in this Part are focused on my own material, rather than on the acts or behaviour of others. As already noted, an earlier draft of this thesis included extensive material about certain aspects of methods and methodology, which (whilst it may have offered potential insight into questions about how unconscious relational material might be at play in supervision in higher education) was problematic: this material has been excluded from this version of the thesis.

Be aware of tricky and slippery questions and issues around truth.

In raising this issue, the University of Sheffield guidance notes on ethics for autoethnographers cite an article by Kristina Medford (2006), in which she raises two key issues, both located around the question of the distinction between ‘Truth and truthfulness’. Her first point recognises the impossibility of being able to write ‘the Truth’: even if that ‘Truth’ exists (and she spells that ‘idea’ consistently with a capital ‘T’), it evades us at a human level; therefore, autoethnographers should strive to be “truthful” (p. 853), and that “good autoethnographers” should be “ethical, critical, reflexive, and

thoughtful when making decisions in their writing” (p. 857). Her second observation relates to the ‘slippery’ nature of human truthfulness. To illustrate this, she tells stories about her own evasive self-representation in photo-ID (is her hair blonde? are her eyes really blue? is she really 128 pounds? is she really old enough to drink alcohol? (pp. 854 & 856)) and about how a fellow autoethnographer and academic had described their relationship (in one place as “on again, off again” and in another as “monogamous” (p. 855)). This slippage itself divides into two types: the “mindful” (that which is done consciously for methodological purposes, such as to protect the identity of a participant), and that which “happens automatically in the retelling” (p. 861):

There is slippage between Truth (or our experience of reality) and truthfulness because sometimes it seems appropriate – even necessary – to abbreviate, edit, or otherwise modify our life stories in our writing. Maybe we do not remember the exact words that were spoken or the background details seem irrelevant, or maybe we are honouring someone’s request not to be included in our writing. The difference between what we know (or what we cannot remember) and what we write is mindful slippage. (Medford, 2006: 853)

That other sort of slippage – that which “happens automatically in the retelling” – is well known to the psychoanalytic tradition, which has a whole vocabulary to describe how what we describe of what *was* may only be how we *feel* it to be now: fantasy, phantasy, denial, splitting, cryptomnesia,⁴⁸ isolation and undoing.⁴⁹ Stories about things that are True will always only

⁴⁸ The return of a forgotten memory without its being recognized as such by the subject, who believes it is something new and original.

⁴⁹ “Isolation” and “undoing” were introduced by Michael Fordham, building on Klein, within a Jungian approach, to describe how affective material might be known consciously, but its significance is ‘isolated’ from the rest of the personality, or the process of

ever be partial representations of that objective actuality, and a key insight that psychoanalytic thinking has offered is that those elisions, evasions and slippages are significant in themselves, and point to processes that are unconscious, and worthy of investigation.

Avoid ‘violent’ textual practices.

Sabi Redwood (2008) and John Bergin and Robert Westwood (2003) characterise as ‘violent’ textual practices which shape and tame the lives that we use as ‘data’ in order to present and privilege a version that serves our purposes. (Sikes, 2015)

This is a risk familiar to qualitative researchers, in that writing about others is ethically complex when the reason for writing about them is that they serve our purposes: we write about that which is important to us, rather than that which is important to our participants or informants (so much so, that they may not recognise themselves in our writing). Again, an awareness of this risk was one of the reasons that underlay the choice of co-authored method offered in Part II. In Part III of the thesis, the risk is mitigated by constant reflexivity as method, review, rewriting, and scrutiny by other readers. Furthermore, it is I who am the subject of Chapter 9 (so the focus of the writing is on my ‘untamed’ life, which I can choose to leave as wild or tame as much as I wish). The material in Chapter 8 is initiated by correspondence from those who feature in the stories – that is to say, initiated by stories they told – and, notwithstanding all the inevitable issues around my subjective storytelling, the focus on the writing is on my perspective of relationships with the pupils I taught: I am not attempting to present a representation of their whole lives in

integration is ‘undone’. Fordham, M. (1974) ‘Defences of the Self’, *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 19(2), pp. 192-199.

school in a relatively small number of words, but to represent something of the psychodynamic qualities of our teaching and learning relationship, as experienced by me and retold more than a decade later.

Respect participants' autonomy and the voluntary nature of participation. Chapters 8 and 9 emerge from writing that had different purposes, and was not initially framed as autoethnography. In presenting this work as autoethnography, a number of additional steps have therefore been taken. For Chapter 8, retrospective consent was sought from the three living individuals who are the foci of the stories in, and the chapter has been edited so that only incidents and events that happened in the public spaces of school are repeated in the stories told. Chapter 9 focuses on my interior psychology: it has been reviewed and re-edited with these guidelines in mind, attending in particular to Tolich's self-protective advice for novice autoethnographers:

My advice for a novice researcher planning to write about their bulimia or attempted suicide, or any other stigmatized experience, is that they should imagine dressing up in sandwich boards and walking around the university proclaiming their stigma. Imagine living the moment now, not in the future. (Tolich, 2010: 1605)

Events describing the behaviour of close (living) relatives have been either removed or reframed, with the attention of the story focused as tightly as possible on my material and that which I can consent to disclose.

Practice 'process consent' checking at each stage. Do not publish anything you would not show the persons mentioned in the text. Assume that all people mentioned in the text will read it one day.

Process consent was fundamental to the co-authored section of this thesis, with the co-authored text being exchanged several times with the other author, and her consent to proceed with the text confirmed and reconfirmed

at various stages as the text developed. Other data, where explicit consent has not been given by the originators for its use in this thesis, have been removed.

Recognise the conflict of interest or coercive influence when seeking informed consent after writing the manuscript. Tolich (2010: 1600-02) describes how Barbara Jago's article 'Chronicling an Academic Depression' (2002) was only published after Jago obtained, at the behest of the editors of the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, retrospective permission from the 23 persons (friends, colleagues and intimates) referred to in the text. Tolich questions just how free and fully informed that consent might have been:

How could Thom not be coerced into giving consent, knowing his former partner was on a psychological knife edge? What mother or friend could refuse permission if the article could advance Jago's career? How could an assistant professor not have undue influence in gaining consent from an undergraduate student? (p. 1602)

The risk here is that when seeking retrospective consent from someone represented in a narrative, personal and institutional power might come into play so as to compromise free consent; or that the existence of the narrative might be perceived as a *fait accompli*, or as something in which the author has invested so much that to refuse consent might be for the 'participant' an unbearable emotional responsibility. This risk is recognised.

Consult with others: as noted above, specific supervisions have discussed at length the ethics of this aspect of the research, and the text has been shared with a number of selected colleagues, and also with a former pupil who expressed an interest in this work (and is a mental health activist).

Beware of internal confidentiality. In internal confidentiality the risk is “not that the researcher will expose confidences to outsiders, but that confidences will be exposed to other participants or members of their family, friendship or acquaintanceship networks” (Tolich, 2010: 1608). In making this point, Tolich builds on his 2004 critique of autoethnographic ethics, ‘Internal Confidentiality: When Confidentiality Assurances Fail Relational Informants’ (Tolich, 2004), in which his argument is illustrated by references to classic studies such as W F Whyte’s *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum* (1943), and Carolyn Ellis’ *Fisher Folk* (1986). Tolich shows how (despite anonymisation), many of the people represented in Whyte’s book found themselves easily identified, and were embarrassed by what was revealed about their relationships, with some doing all they could to discourage people from reading the book (Tolich, 2004: 106); in the case of Ellis’ study, participants were “outraged” and generally “felt the book had made them look stupid” (ibid.). Some of this critique seems to connect with the risks of objectification inherent in certain approaches to writing *about* people, rather than *with* them (see my comments regarding Britzman’s study of ‘Jamie Owl’ and ‘Jack August’ (above, pp. 181-183), in which the *form* of the writing inevitably leads the researcher to objectify the participant.

These issues had been mitigated initially by the choice of co-authorship. In the case of the material presented in Chapters 8 and 9, the following steps have been taken. The stories told in Chapter 8 focus on events that are already known: my reflections are on events that were seen by classes, in the public spaces of the school, or widely recognised – I have focused the material on those psychodynamic aspects of teaching and learning which can be explored without compromising that aspect of internal confidentiality. Other vignettes have been included in Chapter 9 which – though referring to specific instances – are sufficiently vague in regard to contextual details as to make it impossible

to identify the children referred to. The material has been re-read and scrutinised by my supervisor attending to the duty to reduce the risk of compromising internal confidentiality, or making representations of those in the narratives that might be embarrassing or disrespectful.

Authorial anonymity. Notwithstanding the ethical duty to avoid harm, it is probably also the case that some of the ‘unsayable’ things that emerge in ethically-problematic autoethnographies, *should* be said – that there are dangerous stories that need to be told. Discomfort is not harm, and there is, after all, also an ethical duty to disseminate knowledge even if that knowledge is uncomfortable. It may be that the alternative is indeed what Carol Rambo (2007: 354) has characterised as “imbunchar” – the legendary shamanistic trope in which abused children are silenced by having their mouths stitched shut and kept prisoner in caves. Other voices argue that autoethnography, is “designed to be unruly, dangerous, vulnerable, rebellious, and creative”, something that should not be “tamed” (Ellis and Bochner, 2006 : 433).

In Carol Rambo’s defence of one of her more problematic pieces of writing (‘Handing the IRB an Unloaded Gun’ of 2007, referred to above and which includes references to a lover, “Eric”), Rambo goes somewhat further than other autoethnographers, and suggests that certain forms of autoethnographic writing are not “research” as defined by social sciences research processes:

I’d like to call your attention to [the Institutional Review Board’s] definition of research.⁵⁰ I did not gather and analyse information in a systematic way. Mine is autoethnography. My article is not an IRB concern because it is not research by their definition. “Eric” is not a

⁵⁰ Institutional Review Board (IRB): an ethics committee in a US university.

human subject that I systematically did something with. (Rambo, 2007: 357)

I'm not sure I agree that "Eric' is not a human subject that [she] systematically did something with" (he was her lover, after all), and others have, of course, challenged the assertion that autoethnography is not research (Tolich, 2010: 1606-07). In such circumstances, where there is a legitimate justification to tell the story but standard techniques to protect those in the story are likely to be inadequate, then – following Morse's editorial interventions in the case of the article by 'Shelly Carter' (Morse, 2002: 1159) – an autoethnographer should adopt auto-anonymity, through the means of publishing under a *nom de plume*. This has the advantage of "minimiz[ing the] risk to the author and those mentioned in the study without silencing the author's story" (Tolich, 2010: 1606).

Conclusion: Activist Purposes

Autoethnography can be seen as a method in its own right (Chang, 2008) with the likes of culture-grams (p. 98), kin-grams (p. 83), approaches to "external data" (p. 103), and other specific techniques (all of which point to the construction of a certain disciplinary specificity). For me, however, what was attractive about it was the spectacular range of writing, evidenced not least by the four volumes of the Sage handbook, *Autoethnography* (Sikes, 2013) – a diversity of form underlined by the examples presented in Adams et al.'s *Handbook of Autoethnography* (2013), which include performative autoethnography (Bartleet, 2013; Tillmann, 2013) and studies using material painted or drawn by the researcher (Metta, 2013). I was also drawn to the

degree to which autoethnography is open to writerly experimentation in form (as shown in Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis (2015: 23-24)), its explicit acknowledgement of the “messy, uncertain” nature of social life (p. 9), the foregrounding of “dialogism” (p. 14), the centrality of emotions (p. 10, quoting Tami Spry), and autoethnography’s awareness of its own “therapeutic” possibilities (Sikes, 2013: xxvi; Ellis, 2007: 15).

“Why Do Autoethnography?” ask Tony Adams, Stacy Homan Jones and Carolyn Ellis (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015: 36):

1. to critique, make contributions to, and/or extend existing research and theory;
2. to embrace vulnerability as a way to understand emotions and improve social life;
3. to disrupt taboos, break silences, and reclaim lost and disregarded voices;
4. to make research accessible to multiple audiences. (p. 36)

That list represents for me a good summary of what I think has been achieved in this Part III of this project. Autoethnography has made it possible for me to explore the degree to which psychodynamic forces have been at play in my experiences of teaching (and so contribute something to research and theory in education and teaching); my vulnerability – my brokenness, my survival – is central to the story that emerges in this thesis; this material is about issues that are known but not discussed, the unconscious, sexuality in classrooms and the play of power in schools and elsewhere in relationships in education; and I am convinced now that only innovative means of presenting this data (through readable, narrative form) will make it possible for teachers to access the

insights about the psychodynamics of teaching and learning that appear to be so much hidden, forgotten, or disavowed knowledge.

Chapter 8

Four Emails

Email One

In a series of synchronicities, during the year that I started this project, I received three emails from former pupils. The first email came from a young teacher, 'Eve', whom I bumped into during some Saturday teaching at the Institute of Education.

Eve's was one of the classes I wrote about when I was myself a teacher, as part of my continuing professional development. I no longer know what it was I wrote exactly, and the record is deleted, but I do remember some of what I typed into one of my postings in an online discussion at the time: introducing some reflection on teaching that particular class, I explained that when given my timetable by my boss just before the summer holiday that year, I had been told I had to 'push' them.

Why was I under orders to 'push' them? and what did this mean? (And what did this imply for all the other classes?) The school – robustly comprehensive when I was teaching there – had, however, taken the route of becoming a specialist maths college, which allowed them to select up to 10% of Year 7 on 'aptitude' in maths. These 10% were all concentrated in one of the six forms of entry, which was known as 'the maths class'. Although all the classes got

thoroughly mixed up in their second and subsequent years, they were taught as a single group for Year 7, and this concentration of ‘aptitude’ was the justification for ‘pushing’ them. On reflection, I think I taught them with the same level of commitment and enthusiasm as I taught any of my other classes; nor was I given any precise guidance as to what ‘pushing’ them meant, exactly. Somehow, I sensed that it did *not* mean hothousing (that wasn’t the department’s style). So, what did it mean?

And what did it mean to have 10% of Year 7 ‘selected’ on ‘aptitude’? What did I think about selection in a comprehensive school? What about the slippery nature of a notion such as ‘aptitude’ (which collapses quite quickly into ‘prior learning’ and ‘cultural capital’, and so becomes indistinguishable from other measures of performance that benefit particular social groups). My previous experience in local government offered me plenty of insight as to why head-teachers might find such a regime attractive, but for me as a relatively inexperienced teacher, these now problematic notions were at the time all just details (I had a job, I was enjoying it, I was trying to get better at teaching – who cared how the kids got into the school in the first place? – they were all great). I got my timetable and I did what I was told: and in the case of this class, what I was told to do was to ‘push’ them, whatever it was that that meant.

In terms of what we did, I know that one expression of ‘pushing’ the class was to take on the challenging text *Northern Lights* (Pullman, 1995). We also had a less successful read of *Tom’s Midnight Garden* (Pearce, 1958), because it emerged in the process that lots of primary Year 6 teachers use the novel, and it was very familiar to much of the class: so I hastily curtailed my scheme of work and we moved on to something completely different. Other things we did that year included an extended writing scheme of work, and a group

drama project that arose out of something that Eve and a friend did in one of my lessons just before the February half-term.

On my last lesson with them before that spring break, I decided to run a drama activity in which the children devised short improvisations. In so doing, I gave them pretty much free reign, but with a key structuring feature: whilst I let the class sort the groups out themselves (meaning that they worked in friendship groups on this task) I framed it so that they had to draw on models of drama that they knew (and so develop performance techniques that they might only know at an unconscious or implicit level). I may have introduced the task with some expression as vague as ‘draw on something you know’, for I was tired (as were they); or possibly I said something even less helpful, something as gauche as ‘copy something you know from a soap opera’, but more likely, I introduced the task with a paedagogically defensible instruction such as ‘think of something that’s happened in a drama you know well, discuss it in your group and take that story somewhere else, somewhere you want it to go! The final piece can only last two minutes!’ Whatever it was that I said, I remember well that they ran with it. Early in my teaching career, I’d learnt that you can share the burden of the creativity with the children, and that letting go of power creates possibilities.⁵¹

Inevitably, most of the short improvisations that were performed towards the end of the forty-minute lesson drew on recognisable soap opera sources (I remember we had at least two pieces bouncing off the plot of *Eastenders*, one related to *Coronation Street* and there may also have been something that drew on *Neighbours*); what took us all by surprise was Eve’s performance, in

⁵¹ It was what an HMI observing one of my lessons in 2008 generously called ‘calculated risk-taking’ – though I didn’t admit to her that I was left wondering just how much of that was really ‘calculated,’ and how much of it was about ‘sensing’ or ‘feeling’ what is likely to work with a particular group of learners. These days, I would cite Bion and raise questions about whether there is a difference between thinking and feeling.

partnership with Abene',⁵² a Black child born in England of Nigerian parents, with a Nigerian first-name and surname. This pair re-presented a dramatic car crash that had occurred in BBC Radio 4's long-running radio drama, *The Archers*. Whereas with the other performances, there was a quality of *pièce-à-clef*, in which the plot lines, characters, dramatic ironies, and tensions were all rapidly decoded, Eve and Abene's piece left the class utterly mystified.

These two twelve year-olds had re-enacted the near fatal car crash that had been a dramatic twist in the key plot line at that time: Brian Aldridge's affair with Siobhán Hathaway which had by that point resulted in the conception of the child who was to become Rúairi Donovan (Wikipedia, 2017; Billen, 2007). I got the references, but the rest of the class had no points of access at all: it wasn't just that they didn't listen to *The Archers*, they had no idea what the programme was, nor where it was, that Radio 4 existed nor that *The Archers* is the longest-running drama serial in the world. All sorts of ideas came to me in the delicious moment in which only three of us understood what was going on, and within a day or so I had made two resolutions:

- 1) to play the class an episode of *The Archers* (how could I not expose them to this phenomenon of 'Englishness', if only for their general education into media studies and the cultural phenomena of writing, if not necessarily as a model of 'good' drama?); and
- 2) we would spend a half-term on a radio plays scheme of work.

Reflecting on it now, so many things strike me about that moment. One of them is about power, and I see this only now in the light of Eve's generous email to me that prompted the writing of this section. Reflecting on her acknowledgement that her first few years at school were far from happy,

⁵² A pseudonym; a Yoruba girl's name meaning 'we asked for a girl child'.

socially, I now see Eve's independent, if not exactly isolated, quality in a very different light. I thought at first that I wasn't aware that her first few years at school had been so unhappy; thinking back on it, though, I had picked up on some clues, and more has come to mind as in the process of writing this section. I remember that at the start of Year 7 she had teamed up with a girl of Italian extraction, and that that this other half of that pair was more openly eccentric – a child who had a touching devotion with chickens (chicken-shaped erasers, chicken-themed pencil cases, chicken stickers on her school diary etc). Thinking back on it now, I recall that there was a considered, or performed, aspect to this 'obsession', which I'm sure she grew out of (though I don't know when, as I stopped teaching them that year). Whilst I remember that (as often happens) this partnership went through some sort of rupture somewhere during that first year, I suspect now that Eve's initial alliance was an expression of a mutual acceptance of eccentricity, and a decision to occupy that rôle in the class. Nonetheless, I remember that the breakdown of friendship did leave Eve slightly disconnected from the rest of the group, choosing at least for a couple of memorable lessons to sit on her own at the front of the class, off towards the far-right hand of the teacher's desk. Though a capable and strong person in many senses, this sequence of events seems to me to suggest that Eve had lost status in the 'unofficial culture' of the class.

But in that moment when the 'circle of understanding' consisted of me, Eve and Abene, the power-relationships in the class shifted, with the class seeing (slightly resentfully, as I recall) that the teacher valued these shared, obscure cultural references and the collective cultural knowledge – the cultural capital – that was possessed by two children who (I now suspect) were among the more marginal in that group. Some of this I sensed even at the time: I remember delighting in the complexity of the fact that Eve, a very English pupil, and Abene, so very obviously from an immigrant background, had

brought into the inner-city classroom this iconic narrative of ‘middle England’. And what they brought was not the banalities of ‘an everyday story of country folk’, but a salacious plot-line of an affair and an illicit pregnancy good enough to rival any plot of *Eastenders*. What I now sense about this storyline, looking back at it all with the distance of the years, and the learning and experiences that I’ve been through in that time, is that this narrative connected with the gothic and melodramatic territory of the ‘fate worse than death’, and that one aspect of what happened on that February day was that Eve and Abene brought to our class a vicarious performance of prohibited sexualities (lives these two high-achieving children would never want to live-out in reality, but at some level possibly desired and certainly thrilled in). Unconsciously, sex and desire intersected with ethnicity and class in my classroom, through the medium of cheap drama. Never (to paraphrase Sir Noel Coward) underestimate the power of cheap drama.

Having resolved to run the radio plays scheme of work during that second half of the spring half term, I relaxed for much of the half-term break, getting my cassette recorder ready on the Sunday evening just before school started, so as to record live off-air the example episode of *The Archers* required to set the whole thing going. To my horror, it was no ‘everyday’ episode, but the one in which Brian Archer’s wife, Jennifer, finally confronted him over the affair with Siobhán Hathaway that had been the subtext of the car-crash re-enacted by Eve and Abene. I recall some of the dialogue even now: at one point Jennifer screamed at Brian ‘and where did you do it then? in the back of your Jag? a first-class car for a third-class shag?’ Or words to that effect (I cannot exactly recall the marque of car Brian Aldridge drove at the time).

I rang my boss. A woman in late middle age with many years’ teaching experience, she was utterly un-phased and suggested I should go ahead with

the scheme as planned (and agreed with her), complete with the scandalous *Archers* episode.

And so we proceeded. To my delight, the class was quite able to sit through the necessary 13' of radio drama, with no fidgeting or incredulity. Even the line I had been so worried about – worried about corrupting their innocence, about shocking or scandalising them – passed utterly unremarked: they must either have had no idea what a 'shag' was, or used the term with such frequency that it was banal and unremarkable.

I now realise that the explosive quality of the plotting in this particular episode must have helped their concentration; it also framed the way the scheme of work evolved. I had not planned it this way; when I pressed 'play & record' on my cassette recorder that Sunday night, I had expected the evening's 'drama' to have been the utterly uninteresting daily dullness that for most of the time forms the plot of *The Archers*: a dead cow, a pint of 'Shires', a frosty interaction in the village shop. When planning the scheme of work, I recall being pugnaciously conscious that some might have said that I was thoughtlessly or unconsciously engaged in a process of socialisation into the middle class, by attempting to offer *The Archers* as normative, or as a model of quality: in fact, I had chosen to introduce the class to this drama *because* of its shoddiness and banality – how could such a thing last for so long and be so popular, when it was driven in the main by such vapid plot motifs? I had chosen, deliberately, this ordinary, repetitive 'soap' as the starting point for a whole scheme of work exactly *because* of its bizarre endurance, often having thought to myself around that time how it was that it kept going, and why was it that people wanted to listen to the pointless representation of the everyday .

This is all a whole other thesis in itself, and properly the business of what one might call 'Archers studies' that have been the focus of the 'Academic

Archers' conferences (see Hannah Rosefield's coverage in the *New Statesman*, (Rosefield, 2016)). But this material is included here because the reflection on what happened in that class raises a number of questions about teaching and research: it seems that in the process described above, all sorts of things were at play, including accidents (or synchronicities), and also something about how relational material arises in the processes of teaching – or, perhaps more specifically in this case, in the process of teaching English. It wasn't just the technical material about plotting, character and production values that was 'the field' of the educational process; together, the class and I were entering territory that was about understanding life: *The Archers*, and the radio dramas the class and I went on to write, in both their normality and their moments of excitement, were – like autoethnography – using the process of writing and representation of the quotidian to understand what life is. Ostensibly, we were following a curriculum about form, drama, technique, writing and performance; unconsciously (and I realise this only subsequently, in the process of reflection), I was teaching something about love and betrayal, death and desire, friendship and antipathy – and about sex.

The scheme of work unfolded with a lot of productive fun. I had asked the children to attend to technical questions when they were listening to the exemplar episode of *The Archers*, inviting them to think about how scripts were constructed to distinguish between characters you couldn't see, how other plot lines were alluded to, and how sound effects contributed to the storytelling. This resulted in all sorts of experimentation and creativity. One group (I think it was Eve and Abene's, having chosen to 'run' with the car-crash theme) recreated the sounds of a car falling down an embankment by shaking in a particular way a wooden tray filled with gravel. A second group was struggling with how to communicate kissing in a radio play (they wanted the characters to kiss, and for it to be audible, but they didn't actually want to

kiss as a way of achieving the desired effect!). I stumbled on the idea of kissing one's own arm, and remember hamming this up slightly for effect, making the children laugh with some over-expressive slurping noises. It was a memorable moment, and I include it now because something in the way that the idea 'came to mind' will be recognised by so many teachers, because of how similar it is to thousands of moments in teaching, where ideas emerge *between* the teacher and the pupil – and delight both as they come to consciousness. This is what my colleague Joseph Mintz refers to as “intersubjective encounter as a way of coming to know” (Mintz, 2014: 5).

The radio plays scheme of work came to an end, and we moved onto an extended writing project.⁵³ A keen reader of history, Eve wrote a glorious story (a love story, as I recall) set around the Battle of Britain. One of her sources for this was the novel *That Summer* (Grieg, 2000), which for years afterwards remained one of my 'go-to' library recommendations for certain types of reader. Eve's writing was subtle, historically informed, and readable. When I was invited to make a recommendation for a summer writing scheme, it was her name I put forward. I know she took up the opportunity, but we never spoke about it; and though I did not publicise this recommendation, I got a sense that it leaked out, and that it was a surprise for some others in the class. I think there was a degree of jealousy, possibly about the connection that this implied between us.

Reflecting on it all now, I realise that there was another connection between Eve and me beyond my recognition of the quality of her writing, and this lay in the chosen subject matter of the Second World War. In addition to my own part-time wearing of uniform (I have been a naval reservist since 1998), I

⁵³ We most certainly did the schemes of work I write about here; I am reasonably confident that the sequence of events is as described, but have not yet been able to refer to any evidence to check the dates.

had grown up with my father's periodic recollections of growing up in the War. These were stories that seemed to form a connection between him and me, across what was otherwise a not unproblematic relationship: stories of watching the dog-fights in the air above Kent during the summer of 1940, and of seeing the gliders on their way to Operation *Market Garden*, during what would have been the mid-morning of a September Sunday four years later.⁵⁴ These stories, with their wistful, boyish sense of a personal opportunity missed and the yearning for absent fathers on their way to death or the liberation of Europe, helped shape the values of sacrifice and terror that became part of my moral framework.

As I write this, I have again the image of Eve sitting resolutely on her own, and it's only in putting it into words that I begin to get an idea of how difficult that year must have been for her, 'socially' (as she put it herself). That first year at secondary school can often be particularly grim, not because of the ostensible 'educational' activity, but because of what happens in the unofficial spaces of the school, in friendships, relationships and the 'social'. It was for these reasons that my master's dissertation (2004) ended up exploring how children in their first year of secondary school used friendship to construct their 'emerging sense of self'. I remember, back at the time when I wrote the dissertation, that there was something shadowy lurking behind what I meant when writing about the children's 'sense of self' but which, for all my reading around social psychology and sociology, evaded me back then. I now realise that it was a dimly remembered Jungian idea that I must have been introduced to in the early stages of therapy or analysis. The 'self' for Jungians doesn't just mean the subjective person, but the transcendent, metaphysical other with whom we struggle to unite in the process of 'individuation': the focus of

⁵⁴ His memories were of the gliders – I have subsequently worked out that it must have been the start of Operation *Market Garden* that he saw (later dramatised in *A Bridge Too Far*).

Jungian psychoanalysis, individuation is the process of growth and becoming what we are teleologically meant to be. It is a process which could equally be called 'education'.

Email Two

The second came from a woman in her mid-twenties. When I first read it, I was touched and moved, to the point of tears, and for so many reasons. It seemed to me that 'Tara' was saying that only after leaving school had she been able to name the abuse she'd experienced, and I'd helped in some way during that period when it was taking place. On reflection, what I now see is that there was a connection between us (both of us in some way survivors)⁵⁵ which we were both only really able to understand outside of the context of the school; and yet, paradoxically, we both found the school environment in some way 'containing'.⁵⁶

My recollections are that when I first started teaching her class, I was warned that she would be a challenge; I also recall that (because of the way the school in question managed behaviour) for large chunks of time, Tara wasn't in my lessons (always because of things that happened elsewhere). For whatever reason, I know I worked quite hard to keep her in the classroom, though this wasn't always easy, and the knowledge of what she disclosed in her email changes how I think and feel about so many of the anecdotes and incidents I used to tell about her.

⁵⁵ My psychological material alluded to here is covered in more detail in Chapter 9.

⁵⁶ I have slightly blurred some of the surrounding details in this case, so as to assist in the pseudonymisation; the three psychodynamic incidents' are, however, as accurate and true to my recollection as I can get them.

In Year 8, during a quiet moment in class (I think we were doing some whole-class reading), I noticed her fiddling with her skirt (she sat immediately in front of me); the fidgeting continued – it was clear that her hand was *in* her skirt, at the front. I kept my cool, trying not to think about what might actually be going on, with her hand, under her skirt ... eventually, she pulled out a Pritt stick. That was the day I learnt that girls' uniform skirts have pockets in the front, and I used to tell that story for laughs, timing it so that the last thing to be mentioned is the Pritt stick, and getting a laugh, usually, because of its phallic quality. But it's not so funny now, because (as I recall reading in an NUT briefing note a short while ago) all behaviour is a form of communication, and I am troubled by what may have lain beneath this act, what the stick of glue down the front of her skirt may really have meant.

Later, I remember a period when she began to spend so much of the time out of lessons, sitting instead in 'isolation' outside the Head Teacher's office, rather than with me and my teaching colleagues. On one occasion she had – as I recall – only recently returned from a stint of 'internal exclusion'. The class and I were again doing some whole-class reading,⁵⁷ and I suddenly smelt burning. Activating my 'action' mode⁵⁸ I used the command voice and asked the class if anyone else smelt burning, and where was it coming from. Tara instantly stumbled into life, apologising profusely, laughing at her own foolishness, slapping her canvas army surplus bag to douse the wisps of smoke, and explaining that she'd just been idly playing with her lighter (hidden in the bag, lying on her desk), and it had started to smoulder. It was out now, she reassured us. I looked over, and saw that to be the case. There was what

⁵⁷ My lessons then and now consist of a range of activities, it just so happens that two of these incidents occurred during whole-class reading – possibly the teacher-centred quality of the 'performance', and the mediation of a 'third' in the shape of the text, triggers different ways of relating, and allows certain types of material to surface.

⁵⁸ Firefighting is a core maritime skill: I have been on three firefighting courses during my twenty-three years in the Royal Naval Reserve.

screenwriters call ‘a beat’. I remember thinking – quickly, simultaneously, and only partly with words (as one does in these situations) – ‘so she has a lighter; so she smokes, but I’ve not caught her smoking, she’s just got back into class, they’re all waiting with baited breath to see how I deal with this; I think they want to keep her here, too; am I really going to send her out again? she’s apologised; we all fidget’. ‘OK’ I said, ‘let’s move on’. I felt the class relax. I thought I’d done the right thing.

I resolved to be stricter about keeping the bags off the table, and sharper-eyed about how children hide prohibited activities in camouflage such as bags and blazers.

I now find myself looking at all this, and wondering why, instead of fidgeting and ‘attention seeking’ or bravado (‘look everyone, I’m a rebel, I smoke’), I didn’t see ‘borderline fire-setting’, and all that potential pathology that goes with that possibility. Part of the reason is that we all knew she had ‘issues’: Tara was on every list you could imagine, and had the personal attentions on a weekly basis of the Head, Deputy Heads and safeguarding leads. Thinking about it now, I am again struck by how these processes operate – as Menzies Leith showed happens in nursing (Menzies Lyth, 1990 (1959)) – not just to ensure care and protect children, but to protect us from all the things that happen in teaching: all the other ‘stuff’ (the behaviour management procedures, the exclusion, the threat of exclusion) stopped me asking at the time, why did this happen? what does it mean? because the ‘required procedures’ trumped other teacher ways of thinking, including that of the ‘psychoanalytically-informed’ teacher (Tieman, 2013: 91; Murray, 2016: 294).

There was another element to this incident: the professional context in which I was working was complex. Sometimes the school leadership team talked of

the importance of teachers' professional judgement, of how effective teachers dealt with behaviour issues themselves in their own classrooms, rather than resorting to management to sort things out. And sometimes school management attempted 'zero tolerance' policies; more often than not – and this is certainly what happened to Tara – once a child became 'an issue' they were given no quarter. This punitive approach to behaviour changed the way I (and many of my colleagues) behaved – I found myself trying to protect her from further exclusion, rather than report what had happened. It was a position I adopted through feeling, rather than thinking: it was not at the time exactly a considered position, but something rather that I sensed to be the right course of action to take. Had I reported the incident with the lighter, might one of my colleagues seen it as fire-setting? would they have thought about the symbolic significance of this behaviour, and its possible connection with abuse? would it have prompted someone to ask the right question? had that question not been asked by one of the numerous professionals involved in her life already? What I now see to have been taking place was an attempt – an unconscious attempt – to communicate with me.

On another occasion when she was in the later stages of secondary, Tara's class and I read *1984*. One of the trickier elements of that novel are Winston Smith's fantasies of sexual violence:

Suddenly, by the sort of violent effort with which one wrenches one's head away from the pillow in a nightmare, Winston succeeded in transferring his hatred from the face on the screen to the dark-haired girl behind him. Vivid, beautiful hallucinations flashed through his mind. He would flog her to death with a rubber truncheon. He would tie her naked to a stake and shoot her full of arrows like Saint Sebastian. He would ravish her and cut her throat at the moment of climax. Better than before, moreover, he realized why it was that he hated her. He

hated her because she was young and pretty and sexless, because he wanted to go to bed with her and would never do so, because round her sweet supple waist, which seemed to ask you to encircle it with your arm, there was only the odious scarlet sash, aggressive symbol of chastity. (Orwell, 1949 (2003): 18)

It was either when I dealt with this particular and challenging (but critically rewarding) element of the book, or during a class discussion around that time, that Tara launched into a wild anti-feminist speech, a performance in which she seemed to relish taking her outsider rôle in new directions. She often took a lead in our class discussions, but I've forgotten most of the details of her other contributions. Not this one. She began an 'Iron John' defence of masculinity, which became more and more rhetorical, garnering awkward, slightly uncomfortable giggles from some of her classmates (most of whom will have disagreed with her, but didn't choose to take her on) – the room seemed filled with a sense of something disturbed, something only half-understood, most of us unsure whether what we were watching smelt of madness or genius, of being with something somehow right, and yet somehow wrong. Her peroration concluded initially with a salute to the abstract 'phallus' – as I recall, her exact words were, strikingly, “yes, we salute the phallus” – and then finally with gesture of respect in my direction, as its concrete representative in the classroom: a matter of both synecdoche and metonym, I now realise.⁵⁹ I wish I'd thought of the linguistic points at the time, because instead of taking the opportunity to explore aspects of rhetoric and literary theory, I think I just said 'thank you, Tara', and moved on with the lesson, conscious that I had very nearly lost control. Dealing with it that way, I still had a class. Said by anyone else, such a striking intervention would

⁵⁹ Terms in literary theory: synecdoche, a part representing a whole; metonym, a small detail representing an abstract idea.

have been less memorable: risqué, yes, a bit tasteless, yes, but excludable? no: a faux-pas by an over-enthusiastic young person, something they would be embarrassed about later, and something to be forgotten about. But I haven't forgotten it; and looking at it now, it seems to exemplify how psychodynamic processes play in the classroom.

In writing this, I have been troubled by the question of whether, at an early stage in my teaching career, I made the correct professional judgement in keeping these incidents (which took place over several years) to myself, and whether the effect of so doing was possibly to prevent information getting to the right people who might have been able to put things together and help Tara, thus possibly getting her to report earlier what had been happening to her. Yet it is only now, with all the experience and psychoanalysis that I've been through, that I begin to understand what these incidents might have meant, and that these incidents were things that should perhaps have been followed up in some way. Crucially, it only makes sense with her disclosure to me in her email of 2013.

If I bracket off the question of whether or not I did the right thing, what is interesting is what Tara is grateful for, and why she took the trouble to write to her former English teacher so long after the events. To put it in the third person, and acknowledging the influence on this project of the literary form of clinical case studies:

Tara was grateful to her old English teacher for his “supportive” qualities, and his ability to be “patient”, she thanked him for him being something that helped her “through a very difficult time” in her life; using psychoanalytic language, it appears from the clinical material presented that he and his lessons in some degree offered a containment structure which helped Tara in her struggle to find something positive in

her life. Through tolerating tensions, and allowing Tara space to project some of the symbolic material from her inner world, he provided an alternative parenting structure, neither infantilising her nor expecting her to be older than her years. This tolerance was not always easy to maintain, and was the product of both experiential learning and professional discipline; it involved holding ‘the frame’ and allowing Tara space within it to engage in her own forms of experiential learning.

As John Tieman notes about transference in the educational context:

The key to any successful interaction is the ability to endure tension without abandoning the process of interaction. It would be very easy to shame a student who has sexual feelings for a teacher. That might appear to relieve the educator’s tension. It might also lead the student to speak to the teacher again only rarely. Thus the duet. If transference and counter-transference are the duet’s instruments, then [...] developmental processes [...] provide the sheet music. (Tieman, 2007: 43)

Email Three

The third email came from someone who had just turned eighteen, and was finishing her A Levels. I first came across ‘Esther’ in 2006. A reservist, I had been mobilised and was on a two-week operational stand-down half-way through a mobilisation in Iraq; I had returned to school to support the team by watching their lower-school production of *Henry V*. Notwithstanding our departmental commitment to innovation and progressive theatre, the production of *Henry V* which I watched in the school hall one October evening

was very different to what I had expected: it had a particular *avant-garde* quality, and was wild, jagged, and slightly difficult to follow (not helped by having three different Year 9 actors play the lead). In the phrase of my own school drama teacher (Mr Peter Bentley), it was a production where the audience ‘began to feel how hard the seats are’. It also, in response to the choice of approaches to the text exemplified by the classic ‘Olivier’ or ‘Branagh’ interpretations, took the latter, ‘anti-war’, option.

I had expected the play to have been directed by one of my friends and colleagues, but the production turned out to have been led by the temporary drama and English teacher who’d been brought in to cover for me during my deployment, and I got the impression that the ‘anti-war’ theme was not an accident. I recall introducing myself to her at the end of the play to pass on appropriate congratulations; she seemed cold and distantly reserved. I attempted to move the conversation on from a slight hiatus: lightly, and gesturing to the set or some military paraphernalia scattered around the stage, I mentioned (with a social laugh in my voice) that I was myself on leave from a war zone; ‘I know’ she said.

Some of my colleagues seemed uncomfortable on my behalf about all this, but I had spent so long in recent months controlling my emotions that I just took it all very politely (as a good staff officer should, and as I had been trained to do so by the army) and as par for the course for a returning soldier. It later emerged that in addition to whatever else underlay the qualities of that production, she was unhappy at the school, and applied to be relieved of her contract early. When this request was accepted in the February after I returned from Iraq, I came back to teaching after that spring half-term break, picking up her timetable.

Notwithstanding all the problems with it, there are for me two highlights of that production of *Henry V*. One was the explosive, animalistic opening, in which the cast burst on to the stage to the sound-track of ‘the Prodigy’s’ classic 1990s electronica hit, ‘Firestarter’ (a creative response to ‘Oh, for a muse of fire’). The second was Esther’s performance: passionate, intense, under fire. And as I write that now (aware of the fragment of rocket shrapnel on my desk in front of me, recovered from the ground where it hit about ten metres from a different desk of mine in a different world), I realise that there is a counter-transference in that description, for I myself could have been described in exactly those terms back then: passionate, intense, under fire. Re-reading this as I redraft, I come to realise that it was also a good description of my own teenage self, and quite possibly my own performances at school, when I myself frequently in school productions: passionate, intense, and (because of what happened elsewhere) under fire.

I did not teach Esther that year, and when I returned to school, I worked on the upper-school plays: nor was there a lower-school play that year, as my colleagues leading the Drama Department felt a collective need to ‘take a breather’ after the experience of *Henry V*. But at some point that year, Esther sought me out to talk to me about things. She did this a number of times, and after the third or fourth of these conversations, and aware of the need to maintain professional responsibilities and boundaries, I thought it necessary to regularise what was going on. I talked things over with the relevant Assistant Head, suggesting that what might help Esther was that I respond to her request and meet her on a regular basis. Initially, the Assistant Head tried to dissuade me, explaining that Esther was “very complicated” – by which I suspect she meant ‘too complicated, too dangerous, too risky, too mad for you to be able to do anything useful without it all getting messy and unravelling’; but I stood my ground, as I recall citing my professional

judgement and needing to present my case reasonably forcefully, perhaps I did it with intensity and conviction. And so, with the consent of the school management, Esther and I met in a French classroom once a week during the lunch hour for some months and until the point at which I left the school to work full-time at the Institute of Education.

It would not be appropriate to go into detail about what we discussed, but though material might be described by a teacher as pastoral, a therapist might well use the word 'clinical'. And certainly, the quality of the interactions was such that they felt different to other pastoral interactions: in a school, such discussions are more likely to be focused on immediate crises and their resolution (persistent lateness, poor behaviour in the classroom, a domestic crisis). My sessions with Esther, however, ranged more widely.

One important point to note is that these conversations were exactly that – conversations: there was a dialogic quality about them. It was not that I was careless or irresponsible about the counter-transferences: I took the trouble to be considered, one might even say disciplined, about how and what I said, but I was not afraid to speak honestly and openly about the things she brought to the conversation. It was not just a process of me listening silently, but responding to her material or questions or ideas: in so doing, we were able to construct (as she put it herself) “a rational and safe place to talk about things which nobody else would listen to”. As with workshopping a play, a 'third' is created in the space between the interrelating subjectivities.

I was also aware of an Oedipal quality to the process, of how desire moved between us, and was an element in the interactions, and how again this had to be held, tolerated and allowed to be experienced both without inappropriate erotic counter-transference, or shock, denial or rejection, or articulation. I was aware of the risk, but taking the risk had positive consequences; in so

doing, as she put it herself in her email to me, I was able to help her “not to be so sad all the time”.

Email Four

‘Ayobami’ wrote to me in 2016 to inform me that her friend, my former pupil ‘Akasi’, had recently died of an undiagnosed underlying health condition. They had both been members of an English class I taught from their Year 8 through to Year 11. Back then, I don’t recall Akasi working with Ayobami at all, or even hanging out with her. My memories, rather, are of having to separate ‘Ayo’ from making trouble with one of the other class “key disruptors” in that class (as my NQT mentor referred to them): Ayobami – now a teacher herself – was a challenging personality, a bit of a ‘joker’, while a pupil. Akasi was keen, hard-working, polite, helpful, happy, engaged – the sort of pupil who wanted to learn and about whom it was easy to talk positively and enthusiastically during parents’ evenings (and watch both parent and child glow a bit, sit a bit taller in their chairs). She left our school at the end of Year 11. But it would appear that somewhere along the line Ayo and Akasi became close friends.

Akasi came to visit me in my office at the Institute of Education during 2009 or 2010. She was at the time doing a degree in Politics and African Studies at SOAS, the University of London’s School of Oriental and African Studies, and a neighbouring institution. I can’t remember what we talked about, but I do recall how she had changed in the five years or so since I had last seen her: she dressed differently, less conventionally, and her accent had changed, was less ‘Buppie’ and more ‘street’. The way she *was* in my office that day made me

think yet again about the importance of identity and ethnicity in what happens in schools and universities; it made me wonder – though I never got the opportunity to ask – about how studying Politics and African Studies at SOAS might have changed her.

I write that she made me think “yet again” about Race, ethnicity and identity, because it had been a major theme in my classroom practice. In 2003-04 I undertook an action research project as part of my master’s degree in teaching, leading to a dissertation (2004). As noted above, this project was aimed at investigating the girls’ “emerging ideas of self” – and I had expected that the project would open-up ‘pastoral’ issues about self-image or other issues of psychic distress; neither I – nor the school – expected the key issue to emerge from the research to be Race and ethnicity. In summary, the project showed that within a week of the start of their first year, the girls in the class I studied split into groups that were largely shaped by ethnicity, and that something else was happening in which conformity to school values was also being mapped onto cultural or racialised⁶⁰ identity. The key issues were reported by me in an article for *Race Equality Teaching* (2005).

In the summer term 2003, before I had started that project, Akasi knocked on the staff-room door in some state of distress. It was coming towards the end of her Year 9, and various progress measures had been counted (the school was pursuing ‘under-achievement’, and the Deputy Head in charge of lower school was running a range of tutorials in preparation for the start of the GCSE courses). Akasi had been crying and was clearly fragile; with resentment and hurt in her voice she asked me ‘sir, am I an under-achiever?’ I recall that she also added that the Deputy Head had just told her that she was an ‘under-achiever’. This was another of those moments when I thought

⁶⁰ In using the term ‘Race’ here, I am drawing on Critical Race Theory, which asserts that the term should be used to help describe how racism functions.

quickly and hard. On the one hand, I had the immediate feeling-thought that in some way the right thing to do was to say ‘no’; on the other, I also sensed a professional responsibility not to undermine my colleagues, and not to undermine the school’s mission of supporting people to achieve; I think something about ethnicity and opportunity may also have passed through me, about Akasi being Black and my wanting to support Black children and their progression and attainment. I said something like ‘no, not in my classes, certainly not’. This had the effect of calming her distress; I also have a clear memory that she broke eye contact and looked away past my left shoulder down the corridor – not a dissociation, so much as the sort of gesture that in infant observation literature observers note that the infant uses to regulate and control emotional contact with the care-giver. She was calmer, more together, able to return to the normal business of the day. I pocketed the complexity of the whole interaction, to be processed later on.

In my decision-making process in that moment I spoke to Akasi after she banged on the Staff Room door, what I sensed was that she had come to me not so much about her attainment as about her distress that arose from *the meaning her attainment had been given by the school*. To my credit, when I answered Akasi, I thought mainly about *her* needs rather than the ‘achievement discourse’ of the organisation. Her pain had been created by the school, which – though doing its best – was in some way racialised because of the way in which school discourse about Black children operated. Some of this complexity worked at an unconscious level; but I think that because I was already sensitive to unconscious processes, I had some ability to experience them, and so think about them. Also, because of what my childhood had been like⁶¹ and my learning from therapy, I was sensitive primarily to the child’s pain. In Wilfred Bion’s terms, I served as a container that day and my

⁶¹ Explored in more detail below.

thinking processes defused the difficult thoughts, allowing a processed thought-affect to be given back to the child in a bearable form. It also shows how, because psychoanalytic thinking dismantles and diffuses power, the psychoanalytically-informed teacher is engaged in a political process.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to give some idea as to what it was like for me to be a teacher, and to offer some insight into how the interior and exterior worlds of the pupils I worked with intersected with mine in the context of the school we were in – how my experience of teaching was shot through with psychodynamic incidents. Furthermore, I argue that this is a typical actuality of what teaching is. Esther may have sought me out and become a particular ‘pastoral’ case, but hers was an unusual example. In the cases of Eve, Tara and Akasi, teaching was at the core of our relationships – indeed, we would not have *had* a relationship had it not been for the fact that I was the teacher and they were my pupils. Unlike what happened between Esther and me, when they emailed me, what they wrote about was nothing ‘special’ beyond day-to-day classroom interactions; it was simply the memory of teaching that had prompted them to write. However, as I hope will have been clear from the discussion above, this ‘ordinary teaching’ was something tightly linked, either implicitly or explicitly, to a whole range of psychodynamic phenomena: parenting, relational and Oedipal processes, desire, transference, counter-transference, fantasy and phantasy, relationships, care, happiness and what Jungians would call individuation – the process of becoming oneself. And for me, these phenomena were always close to the surface of what happened in the classroom.

I suspect that not all teachers experience school like this. I recall a face-to-face session on a master's degree with a group of NQTs: one teacher in the group had begun to talk about the number of times she was called on by children to listen to their problems and difficulties, or in some way get involved, if only by listening. Another immediately commented that she was never asked to help or listen in that way. After a brief reflective pause, I asked if she wanted to: "No", she said. It seemed likely that the children had detected some sort of psychodynamic process – that the teacher who wanted to help got involved, and the one who chose to stay firmly apart from this particular messiness was never troubled.

Some people are more open to inter-subjective processes than others. This might be a consequence of being informed and sensitive to the unconscious, or to discomfort and distress. In the classroom, I often felt that particular sense of complexity that John Tieman describes in the following vignette:

One day I was teaching and the kids were talking, acting out. I tried to shut them up several times, but to no avail. So I put my head in my hand for half a second and said what has become my favourite prayer: "Lord, you've entrusted me with Your most sacred creation, the children. Now give me the strength, Lord, the strength to stay."

At which point Kevin looked up at me, looked worried, and said to the class, "Be cool, everybody. Be cool. Or he's going to leave us just like everyone else leaves us." (Tieman, 2013: 100)

Tieman explains that one of the elements in this situation was his own experience of having been abandoned as a child by his father. Combined with this, the class had had seven teachers in the previous year, and "only a few of [his] students could name both parents". He adds – perhaps more shocking – that "half-dozen or so could name neither". What is at play in this situation,

then, is not just the children's experiences of teachers coming and going (which is constructed as abandonment, not just 'moving on'), but also the individual teacher's own experience of having been abandoned himself: transferences and counter-transferences suffuse the way that teachers act in the classroom and with children, and how children interact with teachers in their collaborative work to shape the inner- and outer-worlds of the school.

These various examples will, I'm sure, have resonances for many teachers (though not all). They also illustrate how 'the transference' can be seen as either a compulsive repetition of past situations, brought into current life, or as something that can be 'worked' with (or in), if an awareness of the processes at play can be brought into consciousness, processed and used as part of an alliance between people.

Clearly, my own needs and insecurities were part of those interactions, and colour my memories, and reconstructions, of them. For which reason, the interaction between the ethics and the method of inquiry in this field of work was subject to very close scrutiny. But a key blurriness surrounds the inter-subjective boundary between our conscious and unconscious selves.

Consciously, rationally, we know the line that is to be drawn between you and me; but in life, in inter-personal interactions, these lines often become a little fuzzy. Consider the everyday comment such as the one I over-heard in the street (20 Jan 2014) "yes, but he brings it out of people! and that's the problem". The psychodynamic concept of transference challenges the way in which we draw boundaries around our selves, and can represent a particular challenge for classroom teachers. Looking inside myself, I could see that some of these "natural archetypal process[es], multi-beamed and multi-directional" (Wiener, 2010: 83) embraced not only the clinical phenomena of transference, counter-transference, and somatic symptoms, but desire, love and phantasy.

Notwithstanding the joy with which I have recalled Tara, Eve, Esther and Akasi in the process of writing this, I know that there are hundreds of children I've taught whom I do not remember⁶²); and similarly, there are thousands of teachers who are – at least at a conscious level – forgotten. In the autumn of 2014, in the early stages of this project, I attended the 1st Annual Conference of the Psychosocial Studies Association in Preston, Lancashire. There, Myrna Trustram performed – memorably – a reflection on forgetting and being forgotten (Trustram, 2014). In the conversation she created, her audience found themselves politely challenging each other, as we explored our different perspectives on being forgotten and being remembered. While Dr Trustram seemed to rejoice in what was for her the inevitability of her being forgotten (and I remember sensing an erotic quality to this desire for union with Thanatos), I spoke of the ancient Christian practices of reading the names of the dead,⁶³ and how these might serve as an attempt to remember in some way those who have gone before us. For some, this tradition will be nothing more than a defence against feeling the reality of our inevitable obliteration (do we really remember someone dead for a hundred years, just because we read out their name once a year?), but for me the practice expresses something else – that even those who are forgotten, whose narratives are not recorded, whose lives pass without great import or fanfare, effect some change in the world.⁶⁴

⁶² As I was writing this, I was going to admit to there being a mug in our kitchen cupboard given to me by a child whose name I had forgotten. It bears the slogan 'Best Teacher'; however, in the process of typing this, I have been able to remember that her name was Charlie. Thank you again, Charlie, you are remembered.

⁶³ My faith journey has led me to become a lay member of the Dominican Order (following the lead of St Catherine of Sienna, David Jones and Eric Gill before me); in that identity, I am the provincial Necrologist, and maintain a list of several hundreds of names of dead Lay Dominicans of the English Province.

⁶⁴ In another striking synchronicity, the day I finished this chapter in draft, BBC Radio 4's *PM Programme* took the decision to read out, slowly, and with a liturgical quality of

It is the winter of 2017 as I bring the first draft of this piece of writing to a close.⁶⁵ November, the month we remember the dead; in Irish, ‘Samhain’. The light is failing outside in the garden, and on the garden table outside my office, a pumpkin lamp from Halloween collapses, one half of its head slipping downwards into a froth of spittle-like mould, leaving the other eye brightly staring at the sky, as if the pumpkin were recovering from a recent stroke.

Though this section began in an attempt to describe the context of my teaching practice, and explore the power of transference and counter-transference, I find myself reflecting on what it is to remember, what it is to be remembered, and what it is to forget, and be forgotten; what it is, if you like, to die in the mind of the other.

respect and dignity, the names of each of the 71 victims of the Grenfell Tower fire of June 2017.

⁶⁵ 16 November 2017.

Chapter 9

Interior Incidents

Introduction

So far, this thesis has presented a literature review, an historical survey of the relationship of psychoanalytic ideas with education and teaching, a general methodological survey (describing some of the challenges in writing about 'psychodynamic incidents in teaching'), a chapter describing the co-authorship method adopted for some of the research, a chapter of co-authored narrative, a chapter outlining the ethical and methodological issues related to autoethnography and a chapter of autoethnography, focused on my experiences in school as a teacher. This next, and final data chapter, presents material that emerged during the doctoral research process which appears to have brought to consciousness issues latent in my depth psychology which have shed light on what it is for me to be a teacher.

This current chapter develops this psychodynamic-autoethnographic element of the project, and presents a sequence of incidents in which I explore how unconscious, relational material is part of my life as a learner, teacher and researcher, how this material became introjected into my research activity, and at times threatened to overwhelm it. I explore my own psychology, looking at how the process of inquiry during this PhD has deepened my understanding of my own self, and how this impacted on what it was to be a

teacher and a learner; I try to connect my interior experiences (and the contexts in which they were lived) with issues in teaching and learning: to that end, I make some hypotheses about how these ideas might help other teachers.

In other words, whilst Chapter 8 was about the context in which I taught in school, this chapter is a critical, psychological exploration of my interior life – how I *am* as a teacher and a learner. Towards the end of this chapter I look at how these two related but distinct areas of thinking might be brought together in an attempt better to understand aspects of teaching and learning.

Critical Incidents in Teaching

David Tripp's *Critical Incidents in Teaching* (Tripp, 1993 (2003)) was introduced to me several years ago by a senior colleague when I was a junior tutor on the masters' programme I had been engaged to teach on. The book, highly influential in teacher education, presents teachers and teacher educators with the possibilities of narrative as a way of constructing professional knowledge, through the process of extended reflection on critical incidents. Tripp notes at one point that

people often ask what a critical incident is and how to recognise one. The answer is, of course, that critical incidents are not 'things' which exist independently of an observer and are awaiting discovery like gold nuggets or desert islands, but like all data, critical incidents are created. Incidents happen, but critical incidents are produced by the way we look at a situation: a critical incident is an interpretation of the significance of an event. To take something as a critical incident is a value judgment we

make, and the basis of that judgement is the significance we attach to the meaning of the incident. (Tripp, 1993 (2003): 8)

The method which Tripp developed builds on this theoretical position, and underpins the coursework in one of the modules in the master's degree programme I work on. On this particular course, participating teachers are encouraged to keep a journal in which they record normal occurrences in their teaching day (the method is described in more detail in Pickering, Daly and Pachler, 2007). Because it is likely that (without any critical direction or guidance) these journals might just be anecdotal collections of unrelated incidents (including all sorts of material about the 'madness' of teachers' busy days), the teachers are requested to shape their journals by linking incidents with a connecting theme so that eventually, a bigger story will emerge. In this way a critical perspective on a particular issue is developed or sharpened, and something becomes understood.

Methodologically, this is an interesting process, because whilst narrative inquiry in this sort of activity inherently rejects a deductive approach, the critical process recommended by Tripp (and in the master's programme described above) is far from being *radically* inductive in its approach: rather than allow *any* linking topic to emerge from their writing, participating teachers are guided to look for *particular* themes in their narratives: "the critical incident is created by seeing the incident as an example of a category in a wider, usually social, context" (Tripp, 1993 (2003): 25). Our work on the programme has tended to focus on 'leadership' as the theme our participants are directed to tease out of their journals. The 'teaching frame' thus shapes the kind of interactions that participants have with that which was infinite and unconscious before it was given shape on the page.

Tripp's method (as currently used) affords a means of selecting out of the seemingly unending experiences of a professional existence and the rich chaos of an individual's life in school details that are allowed to stand (in some way) for something significantly greater than the specific moment alone.

Furthermore, when used to construct an idea of what 'teaching' or 'good teaching' is, it is as if those selected incidents bear in some way the weight of the whole of the individuals' professional experience. My own research has led me to wonder how this process of shaped, critical reflection on narrative data is not just about a disciplined, 'social sciences method' of developing critical insight into particular subjects worthy of educational inquiry, but can also be regarded as part of an archetypal process in which we contain the infinite possibilities of the realities of our lives: critical reflection on our histories also shapes our narratives, creating meaning out of what might otherwise develop into a psychotic attempt to represent the chaos of reality in written form.

Narrative, Meaning and Madness

The process of selecting connecting themes between critical incidents is thus a process of synecdoche, in which details are taken to stand for something much larger than themselves. Indeed, in this form of writing there seems to me to be a meta-synecdoche in play, in which critical incidents stand for aspects of professional life and expertise, and these themes themselves stand for the abstract category of knowledge that is 'teaching'. The archetypal quality of this process is, I suggest, in the manner by which meaning is created through the selection of details, and that this 'slicing-up' of reality into construable symbols is a guard against the madness that threatens when infinities of

meaning threaten to overwhelm the subject. I am drawing here on Daren Leader's Lacanian approach to paranoia and psychosis as outlined in his *What is Madness?* (Leader, 2011), and also on the insights into language, meaning, madness and performance offered in Charlie Kaufman's film *Synecdoche, New York* (2008). The film opens by presenting the professional and personal disappointments of theatre director, Caden Cotard: his marriage is collapsing, and his productions are conventional.

What changes him into, apparently, a great artist, is when he wins funding that enables him to put himself into his work – literally. He chooses to put on a play of his life. His daily life, as it is currently lived.

The majority of the film thus becomes an exploration of what might happen if an actor were to attempt to do this, to put on a performance of their whole life. You start, naturally, by casting yourself, but because you watch yourself acting, you then have to cast another actor to play you-directing-you; and then you have a conversation with someone at the bus-stop, so they need to be put in, and then you hear through the walls an argument between the neighbours, so they both need casting... and so on. Similarly, the set needs to get ever more complex, with whole buildings reconstructed, including the walls and the lifts. In this hyper-realism, the play becomes not un-performable, but unwatchable: unwatchable not because it is not entertaining, but because it is not staged, because no-one watches real life as if it were theatre- – there are walls, doors and social proprieties in the way. Theatre is a necessary synecdoche of real life, because there is just too much of real life actually to perform.

Possibly, this is the point: the whole is ungraspable. We can attempt to understand the whole, to attempt to have the mind of God, but that way

madness lies. Life cannot be perfectly replicated by any human process, and maybe it can only be understood by taking small fragments around which we construct a human meaning. (Hogan, 2009)

Because of the impossibility of satisfactorily representing reality in anything other than itself, my experience of attempting to condense 'real' life experiences in narrative seems to have led me at times to borderline places (to the edges of sanity). So, what is this process of writing, or creating or analysis except the selection of details about our experience, offered in an attempt to understand an entirety which is beyond representation?

The particular relevance of this discussion to the rest of this chapter is that I am painfully aware that what I offer is a partial, subjective and no-doubt flawed perspective on experiences that were 'actual', but in which there were other actors who might have very different understandings of what took place. I have striven to acknowledge those possible perspectives as far as I am able; but even in those attempts, I know that I can only *try* to achieve this task, and everything that I write is ultimately from my perspective.

Psychodynamic and Relational Incidents in Teaching

My engagement with psychoanalytic theory and autoethnographic method described above has had a reflexive influence on my understanding of Tripp's definition of a critical incident. I don't intend to quibble with his definition that what makes an incident in teaching a critical one in his terms is the value judgements and the meaning that we apply to it (including the effort and consideration implied by that process), but I now feel that there is a psychology underlying the process of selection that Tripp elides: memory

isn't flat, and the teacher's day is not without peaks and troughs – some incidents are, if you like, more critical than others. Some incidents are (borrowing again that phrase from Jung) “feeling toned” (CW 2: 733), and it is this element of the psychology surrounding them that imbues them with a certain numinous – or tenebrous – quality, and makes us remember them in the first place.

As noted above, the term ‘feeling toned’ emerges in the very early days of psychoanalysis, when the discipline was being defined as distinct from other areas of medicine. During that period, one of the things that brought Jung to the attention of Freud was his 1908 paper with Riklin (Keiser, 1980: Appendix D; Kerr, 1995: 59),⁶⁶ which developed Freud's work on word association. In a field in which there is an extensive methodological debate about the degree to which data can or cannot be considered objective evidence of subjective experiences, Jung devised an objective measure of the interior life's projection into the physical world: by timing the delay between the stimulus and the answer in the word association test, it is possible to measure those themes which were ‘feeling toned’ for the subject undergoing the process (Kerr, 1995: 58).

I certainly recognise this phenomenon in my own experiences as a patient: memories of the staggering pauses in response to everyday questions (about one's parents, anger, career choices, or sex), pauses that in clinical encounters might extend to sizeable chunks of time, twenty or forty minutes passing frozen as if time and breathing had stopped. Silence is a key tool in therapeutic practice (Hill, Thompson and Ladany, 2003). Moreover, we all recognise in daily life that moment when the conversation pauses and we experience what playwrights and screen-writers call the ‘beat’, in which

⁶⁶ Jung, C. G. (CW 2) *Experimental Researches* (1973). *Collected Works* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

dialogue and action pause for the ‘beat’ of a heart or imagined drum in an attempt in some way to represent the intersubjective flow of emotions, the confrontation between knowledge and fantasy. Feelings, however, are controversial in psychoanalytic theory and practice. Some have argued to me that feelings can only ever be understood at the subjective level at which they are experienced; for others, feelings can be contagious and experienced intersubjectively (as discussed in relationship to transference and counter-transference, pp. 57-65). Some branches of the psychoanalytic movement are open to possibilities that feelings might be valid. There are such possibilities as Romain Rolland’s “oceanic feeling” or “the simple and direct fact of the sensation of the ‘eternal’” (Fisher, 1976: 20) – though this was for Freud, nothing more than an “illusion”, and the validity of such feelings are firmly rejected by others (Parsons, 1998). Nonetheless, teachers talk about feelings in their classrooms – how a class might *feel* resistant to or excited by learning, and good teachers respond to these feelings, shaping their practice to the needs of the moment, as well as the curriculum. Furthermore, many teachers will recognise a quality of ‘feeling toned’ silence when children do not want to say something which they might not even know how to name.

This will be particularly familiar to teachers in their pastoral work. In an attempt to explain what I’m describing, I offer two examples when this occurred in my teaching. In one case, it was the first lesson of the day (a difficult, noisy and demanding drama class), and one of the girls was unusually silent. I sensed that this was more than just moodiness or reticence – something needed to be looked into – so I took her to one side and asked her what had happened; there was that ‘beat’ when I sensed something really bad had happened, and that she needed to talk about it, but hadn’t yet, so I said something that proved to be the right thing to say and she disclosed that she had been assaulted on the tube; I took her out of the lesson and to the, female,

Head of Year. On another occasion, I was in the street on the way in to school; I met another pupil in Year 10 (or maybe 11): she was dragging her feet, and we were both at risk of being late for school. Again, I sensed something was wrong, something that needed to be discussed, that it wouldn't have been right to let lie; and again, it needed me to say something or do something to make it possible for her to say what was on her mind. On this occasion it was violence: one of her parents was regularly violent and beat her. I looked after her as best I could, reassuring her that what had happened to her was wrong and that she was not to blame; I advised her about what was going to have to happen, and I followed the procedure and informed the child protection officer. I am not alone in having these experiences, these sorts of pastoral interaction, in which silences covered unspoken horrors, in which a small act of responsiveness (of thoughtfulness? of attention? of kindness? of holding in mind?) shifted what might be termed a resistance or a defence, and new understanding was created.

These events are easy to understand as 'psychodynamic incidents in teaching', but they are not limited to those moments of pastoral crisis, and I do not want to reproduce a convenient and conventional split between 'teaching' and 'pastoral' work, in which 'pastoral functions' are as the ones which may legitimately touch on the messiness of human relationships, implying their tidy excision from the classroom. The material I presented in Chapter 8 – the extended reflections on my relationships with 'Eve', 'Tara', 'Esther' and 'Akasi' – provides some sort of evidence of what these psychodynamic incidents might be like: moments in teaching which can be linked by a connecting theme of the relational and the psychodynamic, the recognition of the importance of object relations and that

the fundamental motivational push in human experience is not gratification and tension reduction, using others as a means to an end,

but connections with others as an end in itself. (Black and Mitchell (1995: 115) cited in Balick (2014: xxii))

It is perhaps the quest to explore the existence of these *psychodynamic or relational incidents in teaching*, and add to the evidence about them, that has driven this project from start to finish.

What has emerged from this inquiry is the possibility that combining Tripp's model for exploring teachers' practice with a psychodynamic or relational frame of inquiry can be used to create critical, narrative data about teachers' experiences of psychodynamic and relational phenomena in their professional lives.

The Psychodynamic Incidents Which Follow

Chapter 8 presented material that was about my pupils' experiences of learning (as observed by me, with me part of their lives). This chapter is about my experiences, and I offer here a series of clinical, psychodynamic incidents from my life and are about me as a learner (who is a teacher) and a researcher. The writing is autoethnographic, and is informed by the form of the clinical case study and critical narratives in teaching – this sort of formal and generic innovation being among the “representational possibilities employed by autoethnographers” (Sikes, 2013: xxxi).

What emerges in what follows is how my subjectivity has been held at the centre of a web of love and violence, institutional, familial, conscious and unconscious – and how the emotional pain of this has been a consistent theme in my experiences of education. The remainder of this chapter thus presents a

set of narrative accounts of a series of psychodynamic, critical incidents experienced during the process of writing this doctorate. In each case, I conclude the section by connecting the material presented with the core interest of this inquiry, the existence of psychodynamic and relational incidents in teaching and learning.

Infant Observation⁶⁷

In January 2014, as part of my research method which I was using at that point of the project, I began attending meetings of the SAP's Infant Observation Seminar. As noted earlier, infant observation is a recognised element in psychotherapy trainings, and a number of the professional organisations require trainees to undertake an infant observation as an essential element for a training in adult analysis: for example, the British Psychotherapy Foundation requires it for both its Jungian and Freudian routes (British Psychotherapy Foundation, 2018b) as does the Tavistock for its adult clinical psychodynamic training (Tavistock Portman NHS Trust, 2018). The SAP offers the infant observation as a course for continuing professional development, but does not require it as an essential element in any of its adult trainings (though it is recommended).

Infant observation emerges out of Kleinian object-relations thinking, and was introduced by Esther Bick 'into the curriculum of the Institute of Psycho-Analysis in London in 1960 as part of the course for first year students' (Bick, 1964: 558) – as noted above, Michael Fordham and other post-Jungian

⁶⁷ I briefly introduced this method in Chapter 4; this discussion focuses in more depth on my experience of the method and how it forms some of the data of this autoethnography.

writers and practitioners have written about how to integrate object relations theory into a Jungian framework (see pp. 75-82). In developing the infant observation technique, Esther Bick built on Klein, by whom she had been analysed, and who was one of her clinical supervisors (Chaussecourte, 2006: 50-51). The method is deceptively simple: the observer spends an hour a week with an infant and its primary care giver (usually its mother),⁶⁸ observing, but not taking notes; the observation is written up later, away from the encounter with the infant and its carer; these notes are taken to a seminar group and explored; importantly, the observer is in personal therapy throughout the process (at least a year, normally two, possibly longer).

The personal therapy element is not an accident. As the British Psychotherapy Foundation explain, pithily, on their website:

Observing a baby so intensively [...] brings the observer into contact with early, primitive states and raw emotions, requiring the use of one's self and feelings in understanding the complexities and nuances of what seems to be occurring – within the baby, in the baby's relationships and in the intimate dynamic between the observer and the observed. (British Psychotherapy Foundation, 2018a)

The method of the observation (watch, but don't write, make notes later) serves to enhance the complex manner in which the process functions: observers *are* required to study closely, intensely and intimately the actual interactions between a mother and a baby, but the process of separating the note-making element out from the intensity of the observation changes the 'research' experience significantly. In using a reflective practice to generate observation notes (as opposed to the more 'scientific' model of a structured

⁶⁸ And for that reason, I will henceforth refer to the care giver in the infant observations as 'the mother', notwithstanding the fact that in a minority of cases it might well be a father, or a guardian or non-traditional parent of any gender or sex.

observation), the observer's subjectivity comes more explicitly into play as the observer is required to draw on memory and not direct experience; associations and fantasy are thus activated not only in the group seminar process (where these notes and narratives are discussed and associated to), but in the very process of making the record of the observation: the observation thus blends a description of an objective actuality – of events that took place minutes previously – with the reconstruction of the observer, whose view is filtered by their own internal material (memories and feelings, thoughts and associations).

In my seminar group, there were a number of participants at different stages in their working lives, including trainees on other pathways and a psychotherapist in private practice. The meetings began in the early evening and lasted for just under two hours. The core business began with the presentation of notes from the previous meeting, and then proceeded with a discussion of an observation undertaken by one of the members of the group: there were six members, and each brought material in rotation; this meant that at each meeting only one out of a possible half dozen observations was shared; another member of the group took on the rôle of note taker – a task that was also taken in turn, in strict rotation – and this gave the majority of the group the space to discuss freely the observation that was being shared with them.

A significant chunk of the seminar, therefore, was taken up with our shared associations and interpretations of the observation material presented. As with other parts of the experiential learning that has been built into this project,⁶⁹ this collective process offered a model of a co-authorship, in which inter-subjective exchanges offered ways of constructing a shared

⁶⁹ I am thinking here in particular of the social dreaming matrix technique used during the Jungian Processes Experiential Group.

understanding, and this has contributed to how I practice co-authorship. It also led to a profound shift in my understanding of my own psychology.

As explained earlier, I have been involved in clinical mental health processes since my mid-twenties. Whilst I was undeniably ‘better’ (in the sense of ‘better-than-I-was’) by the age of 31 (after something like six years in therapy), I was not ‘better’ (in the sense that analysis had reached its conclusion, or that the symptoms were fully absent). By the time I had completed three years’ worth of three times-a-week analysis (on top of three years of once a-week therapy) I thought I was in a place to put all that psychotherapy business on one side, and get into ‘doing’ things; but in retrospect (and in the light of the knowledge gained in this research process) I realise now that I was still carrying a lot. I had learnt to describe myself as a depressive, but, in retrospect, it might have been more accurate to have said ‘functioning depressive’, or (even more accurately) ‘functioning depressive with a whiff of paranoia, catastrophic thinking and the occasional borderline psychotic moment’. I loved teaching, but when a lesson went badly, I often experienced this as something devastating, and saw myself as a professional failure. Attempts at rational exploration of this material (the only language even those few colleagues who tried to help could access) did not help – I realise now that such efforts were always going to fail, because rational reassurances are impotent in the face of the sort of psychological material I carry. What I have come to realise is that the roots of these feelings are pre-rational, pre-linguistic, and lie in the embodied terrain of early inter-subjective experiences, in the world of the pre-verbal infant and its relationship with its mother – and this realisation emerged from engaging in the infant observation process.

To be clear, mere rational discussion was never enough to understand my psychic material – what has helped me connect with the root formations of

this psychology have been experiential, not solely intellectual, processes. The understanding I now have really only emerged in the process of undertaking this PhD, because of the depth of psychological inquiry I chose to undertake for it, and, crucially, the *experiential* learning built into the project's design, rather than just the intellectual processes of doctoral research. The infant observation seminar was key to this, because of how it tapped into the world of the mother-and-child – even in the strangely third-hand experience that I had of the process⁷⁰ – and precipitated a profound alteration in my understanding of my life.

Comparing my participation in the infant observation seminar with how I was in the evenings after other psychoanalytic group trainings, my wife has commented that I always returned from the infant observation seminars (January to September 2014) in an unsettled state. At the time, her insight was a surprise to me; in retrospect, I certainly agree that participation in other training events was more vitalising and stimulating: something else was happening in the process of the infant observation and the personal therapy that was also a required part of the method. For the first, serious, time in my life, I began to think about memories of breast feeding, of myself as an infant, of the stories that had been told about me as an anxious infant, always needing to be held, about where that anxiety might have come from, and about how it had – or had not – been contained; I found myself reflecting on how my parents had been in these early years of my existence, when my internal objects had been formed, and how my mother's often confrontational relationship with my brothers (one of whom was himself one of my early caregivers) impacted on my own psychology in the most fundamental terms.

⁷⁰ Third hand because – as noted in the methods section, above – I never found a baby to observe, and spent my time in the seminar 'observing others' observations'.

Here, I offer two pieces of autoethnographic material in an attempt to show what sort of processes it appears to me were at play.

The Defensive Arm

In 2014 I began therapy sessions with an Oxford-based training analyst with the SAP.⁷¹ Therapy with her was part of the method I devised at the start of the PhD, initially for methodological and ethical reasons (to provide a containment structure as I embarked on the psychodynamic enquiry which I, from the earliest point, saw as potentially risky, because of what it might ‘bring to the surface’). Very near the start of that relationship, I think within the first or second session, I chose to use the couch in response to the analyst’s suggestion.

At some point in these early encounters she noticed that I had adopted a particular posture on the couch: lying back, I had pulled my right arm over my face, with the top of the forearm resting supine, covering my eyes, palm upward and outward. It was a gesture I had not before that point noticed or thought about – if asked I suspect I would have offered the rationalising explanation that it was a way of shading my eyes from the light; she suggested that it looked like a gesture of defence, as if blocking a threat, an attack or an incoming hit.

This association, fantasy or idea resonated – it remains one of the memorable moments in the long process of depth analysis. It marked, back in 2014, that point during the infant observation process at which I was finally able to

⁷¹ As noted above in Chapter 4.

connect persistent, distressing emotions with early childhood experiences. I cannot precisely say whether it was the analysis or the infant observation which generated the insight (and the two parts are always connected in the observation process – one cannot do an infant observation without personal therapy) but what I do feel confident to state is that during that year, I formed the understanding that some of my more difficult emotions (the catastrophic thinking, the periodic sense of despair in the face of apparently small difficulties, the frequent sense of abandonment and inconsolable loss) could be understood in terms of object relations theory: in watching other people study infants as they build relationships with the world in which their anxieties were either calmed and contained, or ignored and left to be introjected, I saw something of my own pre-linguistic life.

A particular insight also emerged. I had since my twenties recognised that there had been quite a lot of anger and associated behaviours in my family during my early childhood. All of us in my birth family have come, I think, to accept this painful fact in some way and at some rational level. However – for me – it had taken a certain amount of therapy just to be able to name this reality; and even then (and up to the point at which I undertook the infant observation) there had been a certain detachment from the emotional qualities of those memories (what Michael Fordham calls “undoing” and “isolation” (1974: 192-193)). The infant observation seminar, however, seemed to serve to connect the early memories with the emotions – emotions that came from such an early point in my life that they seemed wound up in my very DNA.⁷²

What I have come to believe is that the conflict between elements of my family which I had been part of as an infant had produced for me a particularly

⁷² This is not merely a metaphor: aspects of childhood trauma are epigenetic (see, for example, Frodl *et al.*, 2010; Negele *et al.*, 2015; Shrivastava *et al.*, 2017) as well as having psychodynamic or psychological expression (as explored in, for example, Connolly, 2011 and Pickering, 2011).

difficult interior reality (Frodl *et al.*, 2010; Connolly, 2011; Pickering, 2012; Negele *et al.*, 2015; Shrivastava *et al.*, 2017). Through the process of participation in the infant observation process I came to realise that the incidents I observed as a child (scenes of tension and acting-out between members of my family) had been internalised as trauma (a ‘normal’ and predictable process for infants seeing things they don’t fully understand). Even more particularly, in these moments, what I had seen – or, perhaps, more accurately, what I remember – was my love objects (two people who cared for me in different ways) in direct and painful conflict with each other. In consequence, two aspects of love became frozen in a form of conflict that – deeply embedded in early memory – had not yet been resolved.

This structure – the structure of my internal objects – was a particularly painful element of my adult psychology. The essence of it as I now understand it is that my internal love objects have for some time been locked in conflict. This has led to periodic crises in which deeply internalised emotions have surfaced to attack and undermine the experiences and the processes that are most important to me: that which I ‘love’ is attacked by something else that I love lurking deep inside me. What exactly it is that is attacked has changed at different times in my life: sometimes it has been relationships (destroyed more often than not before they’ve even begun); most recently it has been musicianship, or my idea of myself as a competent musician. But for a large period in my thirties – when it was a defining part of my life – that dark, nameless dementor inside me periodically rose up to attack my idea of myself as a teacher.

This vignette and analysis concerned mainly my associations to the infant’s experience of the mother-baby dyad; the next story focuses, though not exclusively, on the other side of it that pairing, that of the m/other.

The Mother's Slow Death

One of my colleagues was observing an infant who lived in a family in which both the parents were involved in the creative performing arts. Until the point at which the child was born, both the mother's and the father's careers were at similar stages, and both had achieved some significant success, including regular work in prestigious venues and international travel. I am not aware how exactly the child-care arrangements were settled, but by the point at which I joined the seminar, it had been resolved that the father would continue to perform, and the mother would stay at home with the baby. The father's career was sufficiently demanding that he was often not resident in the house at the point at which the observation reported to the group had taken place. (This is the nature of much work in the performing arts, whether theatre, dance, opera or instrumental work: long hours are spent performing at night, with even longer hours rehearsing during the day – and the prestigious venues that agents work so hard to get for their clients are rarely 'round the corner'.) What slowly emerged during the observation was a sense of the 'slow death' that the mother was experiencing in the sacrifices of motherhood, through the impact that the baby had on the mother's musicianship. At some point during the observation, it became clear that the mother was unable to practise, and that this was entirely down to the baby's demanding existence in her life (and how family duties had been divided up).

Not being able to practise may seem a trivial detail (and some people might be grateful for the excuse to avoid comparable, repetitive work) because unless you've got to the point in your musicianship where daily, extended learning and re-learning of demanding repertoire is a normal part of your life, it is probably hard to understand what impact the *loss* of that will have on you. Musical skill is perishable; one can spend a week practising one bar over and over again until it's right – stop for a couple of days, and the skill built up with

such effort has slipped away again. There is a famous saying amongst musicians (ascribed in various unsourced places on-line to Jascha Heifetz), that ‘if I don’t practise one day, I know it; two days, the critics know it; three days, the public knows it’. In addition to my empathy with the mother as a musician, part of me was slightly self-righteous and not a little bit shocked – in my current household other arrangements had been made so that the childcare was shared by both parents, and both were able to keep professional lives ticking over. Had no one, I wondered to myself as I listened to the material presented in the seminar, learnt anything from feminism?

One particular detail from this observation is still clear in my memory: reading out her notes one evening in 2014, the observer told how she approached the flat before the weekly hour-long observation; from behind the closed door she heard a couple of bars of music, a snatched moment of something intimate to the mother: not ‘proper practice’, but a something personal, passing, incomplete, broken – for the music stopped as the observer knocked on the door.

Why did this case resonate so strongly with me? Why does it still have the power to disturb? Partly it was down to my own commitment to music: I am not a professional musician, but I try hard to perform to the highest possible standard, and this involves regular practice – one of my own sources of loss in my daily life is how the obligations of my day job, or of child-care or other domestic duties mean that rehearsal time is all too often squeezed out. For me, this has involved feelings – precursors of death – that have been at times distressing; but for a professional, whose whole career has been built on eight hours practice a day, I am still struck by the depth of the sacrifice that parenthood demanded from this mother. From the strange ‘intimate distance’ of the infant observation seminar, this seemed an almost unbearable loss of personal identity, a painful, slow death.

For me, an added poignancy was that this identification with the mother demanded a reassessment of my own conceptualisation of my early life experiences. In a thoroughly Kleinian schizoid position, I had previously been inclined to ‘blame’ the m/other, identifying rather simplistically with the needs of the infant (my own had in my mind at times been overlooked); the infant observation process moved me to what one might describe as a Kleinian ‘depressive position’ in which the infant-mother dyad is seen not as a split of ‘good’ on one side and ‘bad’ on the other, but a linked couple which contains aspects of both good and evil. My previous defence had been to ‘split’ the dyad, and identify with the infant (as if it were some sort of agentless victim of the process): I remember the power of my initial empathy with the baby (shadowed by loneliness and fear and deep-seated rage), and how this seemed to arise from my emerging realisation that my infancy had been overcast by unbearable emotions (such as those theorised by Klein).⁷³ Now, I found myself empathising with the mother – and, because of what this implied for my own phantasy mother, this was a disturbing place to be.

I began to realise that the m/other was not just an other, but also a person like me, who had had to give up bits of themselves for their spouse or child. I found myself not exactly empathising with my mother, but realising a disturbing connection – that both my mother and I might have experienced our child’s existence (however much we loved the infant, however much we might have been prepared to give up everything for the baby) as a threat to

⁷³ In writing that, I am reminded that a senior colleague once remarked to me in a Klein reading group, that she rejected the manner in which Klein’s ‘good breast/bad breast’ theory ‘blamed the mother’ for everything that went wrong in the parenting process. Ostensibly feminist, this comment seems now to be – just as was my own initial thinking about the infant as the victim – a defensive split (or, to use Kleinian vocabulary, ‘schizoid’): a more integrated way of thinking about the actuality of the human relationship is that the good and the bad are there together, locked in a mutually creating existence.

our own lives, in the sense that what we want to be – to do – was blocked by the presence of the needy infant.

Relating This to Teaching

What relevance does this have for me as a teacher? How can anything that I've described in the preceding pages (my re-interrogation of memories of my own infancy from half a century ago) be of any use to other teachers?

I argue that the process of conducting the infant observation (both the seminar attendance and the concomitant personal therapy) put me in a place where I engaged with the *feelings and ideas* that underlie my basic psychology and (drawing on Bion (1967: 110-119)) my ways of thinking and my very vocabulary. I argue that this process not only got me *thinking* about how my adult identity is built on structures that were made in me as an infant, but also afforded the *experience* in which I reconnected to the basic *feelings* of 'mother' and 'child' and was able to examine these in clear and unpleasant detail.

We don't become teachers by accident; we don't exist as practitioners in a void. We all start as infants, and that infancy is what shapes our internal objects. The objects of 'mother and child' are cognate to those of 'adult and child', and our understanding of how these structures operate differently for each of us in our deep psychology is of direct relevance to teachers.

Furthermore, teachers' reflective decision-making (something prized in teacher education and by professional standards systems) is undertaken on the foundations of this personal psychology (how we think and how we feel): when the core of your business is making decisions in response to what *children* do, it seems important to understand what your idea of normality is in a

child's relationship with adults. Such a level of understanding is core to what it means to think of the 'relational' aspects of teaching and learning.

This insight has changed the way I think about vocabulary that is often used in teaching, or about teachers. Words I used to consider applying to myself or my teaching (such as 'empathy', 'making a connection', 'having a commitment') now have a different feel. Whereas before they seemed markers of something perhaps charismatic and commendable, now they seem shadowed by something that perhaps comes from somewhere less mature – an adolescent quality I had as a result of some unprocessed psychodynamic material, which possibly helped me connect (unconsciously) with the adolescents I was working with.

As a teacher, I know that in all sorts of situations, I often took the side of the child or young person. The critical incident with Akasi described in Chapter 8 is one such example: Akasi's distress at being described as 'failing' was more important to me in that moment than my responsibility to back-up the leadership of the school – indeed (and I think this is the point about how basic relational structures were at play), *challenging* authority seemed exactly the right thing for me to do. Race, power, discourses of achievement and failure within the English state education system were among the many forces that intersected at the moment Akasi banged on the Staff Room door and asked to talk to me; however, I now suspect that my 'decision' to hold her distress, and so help her process what had happened to her, was at its core an emotional one, formed by my empathy with her, as a child made into the object of so much institutional violence. Reflecting on that incident now, what I remember most clearly is Akasi's almost unbearable distress at being labelled an 'underachiever', which seemed to have been internalised as 'failure'. What she needed from me was simply for me to tell her that she was *not* a failure; any alternative more 'teacherly' action (such as a picky

attempt at distinguishing between ‘targets’ and ‘progress’ and ‘achievement’ and ‘cohorts’) would have simply let her down. At the same time, I realise that the quality of her distress as being ‘unbearable’ might be less what was ‘going on’ inside her, than my imposition of meaning on what I saw, structured by my own repressed infantile memories of something like that same abandonment or rejection – and that those memories were shaped not only by a possible failure of the parental function to console and contain those negative emotions but also by the fact that the parental function was so very often at the very core and root of that unbearable material in the first place.

Nor do these sorts of object relations structures only shape one’s relationships with children – they can affect how we are with all sorts of people who become our symbolic or institutional parent (such as those in positions of power or authority over us), be they head teachers, deputy heads (or, thinking about it in a slightly different way) anyone whose rôle in our lives is, consciously or unconsciously, to infantilise. So, just as my own internal objects helped me connect to children rendered voiceless in the face of the ‘parental power’ of the school, so those same lurking internal objects made me more likely to slip into the child’s rôle of speechless – or raging – baby, when I myself became infantilised by the school system, or by the institutional, educational power of the university or its doctoral education process.

A Psychological Incident, Summer 2016: If Ye Love Me

In the section above, I hope to have provided some analysis of how my participation in the infant observation process afforded a connection with deep

psychic structures and material that had up to that point remained unconscious, one might say repressed. I also suggest that this aspect of my personality was – and is – a key element in what motivated me to become a teacher and was part of my personality in the classroom. In this section, I look at how the research process (and in particular, that aspect of the research process which was about the experiential and clinical investigation of my own psychology) brought the pathological aspects of my interior psychology to the surface. I will therefore, in the material which follows, present a description of an acute psychological incident. I argue that the momentary crisis I describe here is part of a process of healing in which I have finally come to connect and understand deep interior structures – structures which form the basis of my identity as a teacher. I further argue that improved understanding of the other psychodynamic phenomena at play have significant methodological implications.

The incident I describe took place in the early summer of 2016 while singing a sixteenth century anthem by Thomas Tallis; it requires a little musicological context to understand some of the symbolism involved, which needs to begin with the text of the motet:

If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter; that He may abide with you for ever, e'en the Spirit of Truth. Gospel of John 14, 15-17

During the University vacations, a group of singers deputises for Oxford's Cathedral Choir; I first sang alto with them during the summer of 2011, taking a break from this because of childcare, returning to singing again more regularly since the autumn of 2015. In one of the weeks of our 'residence' in

the spring or early summer of 2015,⁷⁴ we sang the anthem ‘If Ye Love Me’ by Thomas Tallis as part of an Evensong.

I have probably sung ‘If Ye Love Me’ about a hundred times, the first time at a friend’s wedding in November 2004 (just over a year after I started singing Evensong regularly). On that occasion, I remember telling one of my colleagues in the music department at school that it had been selected – her face lit up as she thought of the piece, commenting on its simplicity and loveliness. Since then, I’ve sung it at Evensongs, Masses and ordinations, both in Anglican and Catholic churches. One of the altos I stand next to in the choir stalls at Oxford Cathedral has asserted that ‘If Ye Love Me’ is ‘the first’ church anthem in the English language⁷⁵ – I’m not sure if that’s true, but its inclusion in *Day’s Service Book* of 1560 suggests that it was written under the highly protestant regime of Edward VI,⁷⁶ certainly making it one of the first, if not *the* first. That ‘protestant’ quality of the music still gives it for me a certain frisson as a fruit of a forbidden tree, belonging to a culture that until only a few years before my birth, practising Catholics needed their bishop’s permission to sample. Anglican liturgy (normal to the point of banal for some) thus persists in having for me an exotic flavour, and I’m still the only member of my birth family to have been exposed in any depth or detail to a repertoire my mother once dismissed as ‘that waily singing’.

The piece is in a ‘responsory’ form, starting with a low first part which shifts up a gear in the second (or ‘B’ part) through a clear modulation to the dominant. In this second part, Tallis paints the words with the music, in the delicate and restrained manner proper to the English church music of the

⁷⁴ Either Easter or Whitsun that year.

⁷⁵ Private conversation, April 2017.

⁷⁶ I am indebted to ‘Mark from Ireland’ in the discussion on this piece in the blog ‘SaturdayChorale.com’ for his faultless reasoning regarding the date of authorship of ‘If Ye Love Me’.

period: the voices take it in turn to celebrate the theological conviction in John's gospel that we will be gifted 'ee'n the sp'rit of Truth', each line rising in sequence out of the texture, singing a repeated fifth that introduces the brightness of the dominant on the words 'e'en', briefly sinking back to the tonic, then returning to the clarity of the new tonality on the very word 'Truth', before the harmony sinks back to a stable, reliable, earth-bound home in the tonic.

What happened to me that day during the early summer of 2016 is that I could not sing the word 'Truth'.

As the music set off in the second part of Tallis' motet, I felt a rising sense of fear at the approach of the repeated top C_{5s}⁷⁷ in my line (notes I've sung quite competently probably a hundred times). But once the man starts to wave his hands and the team sets off, there's nothing you can do – the beat ticks down to the moment your voice has to say something, the moment you have to perform, to 'do' something – time and the beat of the piece march on inexorably towards a moment of Truth, whatever that Truth might be. On the first repeat of the second part, it was a fleeting fear, like being at the edge of a cliff but stepping back just before actually falling – and as the C approached, I stepped back, missing that top C; then, as the music came round a second time, my heart went out of control, terror overtook me, and I stood paralysed and powerless, sweating and terrified, alone and unconnected in any way to the simple beauty of the music that surrounded me. No one around me seemed to notice (and if they had noticed the missed note, or that I'd stopped singing, they were all just too polite to mention it), but I was wracked and wrecked; the actual experience was over in seconds, but I was

⁷⁷ C one octave above middle-C.

left with a sense of having been beaten by the moment. And beaten, in a different way, by something else.

I quietly left the vestry, avoiding people, and went to the empty tomb of St Frideswide; and there, I knelt and wept, tears falling in flat and shining puddles onto the fourteenth century Purbeck marble tomb top: I remember looking at these tears, thinking about these as some sort of offering, and then smearing them away, wiping the evidence out of existence.

What was this about? How can I make sense of this? How does it relate to this inquiry?

What I experienced in the stalls that day during Eastertide 2016 was something like a flash-back, an excursion into a place where life seemed overwhelmed by emotions from elsewhere: it was what Suzie Orbach calls a “momentary psychosis”. Orbach describes exactly the same symptoms, arising from a counter-transference experience with an anxious patient:

I became rigid, started to sweat, cursed myself for not having an alarm alert in my room before I could find a way to still my momentary psychosis. (Orbach, 2003: 5)

In her analysis of the patient whose material had generated this response, Orbach goes on to use Winnicottian ideas of containment and Kleinian object relations theory to explore how the patient’s own early experiences were embodied in him, and projected into her. I read this article in the autumn of 2016, as part of the SAP’s ‘Jungian Processes Experiential Group’ which I had been attending as part of the pre-clinical training that I had built into this project; I can still recall how during the Foundations Course the seminar leader discussed his own borderline psychotic counter-transferences experienced in clinical contexts during his training – he also explained how his

supervisor encouraged him to 'sit with' these feelings, to tolerate them even in their extreme discomfort, and understand them as part of the healing process. For traditional Jungians, it would not be a coincidence that the focus during 2016-17 for this experiential group was 'the body', just at the time that my own experiences brought me to understand the bodily nature of my psychology in a very conscious way; nor can it be a coincidence that the containing process of my own personal therapy ceased in May of 2016, for reasons of brutal economy. And thus, all these experiences collide, in what Jung suggested might be called 'synchronicity' (CW 8: 969).

What happened to me in the stalls at Oxford Cathedral in 2016 was an acute experience which – though appalling for me at the time – was part of a process through which I have come to understand things that have long been elements of my life. Though unusual in its intensity, the incident was, I realised on reflection, simply an extreme version of a response that had troubled me for a long time. Just as Orbach's momentary psychosis had been in her analysis a somatisation of the projection of early object relational experiences, I came to realise that my own pain and distress (experienced bodily and in a radically non-verbal, non-rational way) had its roots in pre-verbal object relations experiences and wordless feelings that had come to the surface through the infant observation process. And I also came to understand that these emotions were most active in those activities – music, teaching – that were for me charged with the commitment of love. The truth was that love was deep inside me, in conflict.

This conflict between my internal love objects was formed at a level beyond language; and until I had engaged with the infant observation process and the concomitant analysis associated with it, it had remained beyond reach.

At a conscious level, therapy in my twenties and early thirties had taught me an immense amount about myself. Through telling my story, I learnt how fear had led to a repression of anger, and how that anger had become depression. I had come to see how in my childhood, my own mistakes often had consequences that I experienced as catastrophic. I learnt how, as I grew up, this ‘catastrophic thinking’ had come to affect the way I related to the normal experiences that all teenagers go through: failures in examinations, mistakes in relationships, mishandling of someone’s sensitivities; all became appalling – and this fear shadowed many of my choices as a teenager and young adult. To paraphrase Tolstoy, all happy adolescences are alike, each unhappy adolescence is unhappy in its own way. In early adulthood, the disabling fear associated with the overbearing threat of what *might* happen if things went wrong led me to avoid the risks associated with numerous aspects of normal life. In terms of relationships, by the age of twenty-two I had decided to avoid them entirely (for the risks were too great), and in terms of life choices, I avoided doing things that I loved, pursuing instead work which brought about a sense of obligation or moral duty.

The teacher’s melancholia makes readable the losses implied in becoming a teacher: aspects of the self that had to be given up – desire, or need, or even helplessness – in exchange for the professional role. (Farley, 2014: 121)

Therapy in my twenties and early thirties used talk – that is to say, language spoken within the dyadic therapeutic frame – to engage with this material: I talked-through (and so brought to consciousness) a realisation of how so many of the things I had done in my life had been shadowed by difficult memories I had up to that point repressed. I learnt to rediscover creativity in the shape of performance, and music; I allowed myself to explore sexuality; I began to take singing lessons, and eventually joined a choir; I allowed myself fun (and

discovered what fun was); I learnt that working with children and young people was itself *fun*;⁷⁸ I learnt to make more conscious choices, and among those choices was the decision to become a teacher. It was this process, then, that allowed me to become the ‘functioning depressive with a whiff of paranoia, catastrophic thinking and the occasional borderline psychotic moment’ whom I described above. Through the process of therapy, the parts of my pathological material that could be understood rationally – the parts that had been formed *in* language, during a period of my life when I *had* language – had been analysed *in and through language*. But that by no means meant that I was fully cured: I became a teacher with the pre-linguistic, object relations material still unexplored and still pathological, because circumstances had not got the point at which I would be able to explore this pre-verbal, experiential, embodied material.

That is not to say, however, that this area of my underlying psychology was entirely out of reach; either my very first counsellor (a trainee whom I saw on a once-a-week basis) or her supervisor detected this material lurking below the conscious carapace⁷⁹ of my existence, and tried on at least one occasion to get me to explore it, to bring it to consciousness. I remember clearly that at some point during this first encounter with therapy (when I was twenty-five, or twenty-six), she asked me about very early childhood experiences; I think she may have had a couple of goes at it, but certainly on one occasion, she asked what life had been like ‘for a very little Ambrose’. Although some early experiences came to light, I struggled to understand what relevance infancy might have to what I was at that point dealing with. What seemed much more

⁷⁸ A strictly psychoanalytic reading of this material might interrogate the libidinous aspect of this ‘fun’ which other schools of psychology might describe as ‘arousal’.

⁷⁹ I recall using this slightly florid word to describe part of myself – that I felt I had constructed a ‘carapace’ around myself. This could perhaps be viewed as a form of ‘split’ in Kleinian terms, or certainly as a defence.

pertinent to me at the time were the vivid and easily-remembered experiences of my ‘conscious childhood’ and adolescence. Notwithstanding the initial months of denial, in due course, the process of therapy made clear the connections between my symptoms and repressed rage, between my denial of sexual and other desires and parental anger. These connections were rational and relevant, and this narrative formed a particular connection between me and the young people I then went on to teach, allowing me as it did to reconnect with the normal experiences of an adolescence that had to that point not fully been lived out – but in some way, I now see, it re-enacted a split in which the parental figures were pathologized and rendered negative objects of infantile rage – it was too easy to side with the adolescent, to empathise as well as just sympathise. Possibly, when I became a teacher, there was a quality of von Franz’s *puer aeternus* about me (von Franz, 1980 [2000]).

Thus, whilst things definitely improved as a result of the therapeutic process – and I became a functioning human being – some issues remained unresolved: I remained disconnected from parts of myself that nonetheless were being projected onto the outside world; nor had the unspoken, pre-linguistic feelings of wordless fear, rejection, abandonment, and failure that lay deep inside me gone away. Until another process occurred in which this projected material could be reintegrated, I would remain vulnerable. And this was the state of my personality (my ego,⁸⁰ if you like) when I began school teaching.

I loved school teaching. In a self-conscious reference to Hunter S Thompson’s commentary about politics, I once described a good lesson as *Better than Sex* (Thompson, 1994 (2010)). It had to be a very good lesson, where carefully set out activities take on a roar of their own in the performance with the class, and wild learning occurs with inquiry and curiosity taking everyone into

⁸⁰ In the Jungian sense of the ‘personal identity’ as opposed to the Freudian sense of the ideal construct of an individual that is in some dialogue with a force such as the id.

unexpected places – it is learning as raw pleasure. But when lessons went badly wrong, or I misjudged an interaction with a child, I found myself thrown into vortices of despair, often running over in my head the script that I was ‘a bad teacher’, or ‘incompetent’. It was the experience with ‘If Ye Love Me’ (framed by the experiential learning of the infant observation seminar) that allowed me to see that this momentary psychosis had its roots in the same material that had been chewing away at my soul for decades, the phenomena so many freely refer to as their ‘demons’.

It was clearly significant that of all the hundreds of pieces in which counter-tenors are asked to sing C₅s, the piece I stumbled on was about ‘Truth’ and ‘Love’: the word I couldn’t give voice to was ‘Truth’, but it was a truth that was predicated – musically, theologically and psychologically – on Love. So came the realisation that the roots of my material lay in the fact that my internal love objects were in perpetual conflict, that what I loved (be it singing or teaching) was set to fight itself until brought to consciousness. Despite the years of self-examination, I was ultimately only able to analyse and bring to consciousness where those self-abusive feelings really came from through the actual psychotic experience of flash-back – an experience of reconnecting to early, pre-verbal feelings that had not come to the surface prior to the process of infant observation.

Relevance to Other Teachers

After this thesis is examined, and is, I hope, filed safely away in the University library, I wonder how many times it will be read. Possibly the document, at least in hard copy, will sit on a horizontal surface and – albeit more slowly

than the pumpkin referred to in Chapter 8 – simply entropy. Such is the fate of many doctoral theses, a risk made more acute in this case by the question of what on earth in all that I’ve written about myself could ever be of any relevance to anyone else? Indeed, the rotting pumpkin head seems a particularly apposite symbol for this project, offering itself as a metonym for my attempt to represent aspects of my interior life – an act of egotistical obsession and solipsistic irrelevance destined only (and perhaps worthy only) to rot. The fact of decay which the image confronts us with offers itself as a symbol of those aspects of one’s psyche, which, once captured, elude permanent grasp, their vitality fading even as they are enumerated and named, simply passing out of our current web of meaning. That material quality of the rot and decay serves also to remind us of the physicality of knowledge – its embodied quality – and so challenge the Cartesian risk inherent in using a head to represent a project such as this, the danger that readers might assume that the ‘head’ is to be taken as the repository of the self.⁸¹

I realise that aspects of what is in this thesis are conventional case study material, from which “fuzzy generalisations” (Bassey, 1999; Hammersley, 2001; Pratt, 2003) might be derived. But this seems less true of the material in this chapter, which has focused so tightly on my own interior pathology. Is it possible to generalise (fuzzily or otherwise) from what has just been read and argue from the specific details of the psychodynamic crises described

⁸¹ The severed head proves an incredibly rich symbol, to which I find I can make rapid associations: there is the *Severed Head* in Iris Murdoch’s novel of the same name; the legendary – and notorious – 1970s film *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia*; the severed heads on the coat-of-arms of Benedict XVI (a philosopher and theologian of surprising compassion); Salome’s demand for the head of John the Baptist; the head of ‘Tracey’, delivered in a box in the final scenes of the theologically dystopic 1994 film *Seven*; St Dymphna’s head, severed in her father’s incestuous rage; the shrunken heads in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford (now in long-term storage and hidden from view) – to mention just a few.

above that other teachers are likely to experience re-enactments of their early object relations?

Kvale (1999) makes the point that

the transfer of psychoanalytical knowledge rests on *analytical generalization*, which involves a reasoned judgment about the extent to which we can use the findings from one study as a guide to what might occur in another situation. Analytical generalization of psychoanalytically-produced knowledge to human behaviour outside therapeutic situations will then depend on extensive documentation and argumentation (p. 107).

Kvale's argument continues, suggesting that is the reader – the decoder, the user, the interpreter, the clinician, the practitioner – who should have to judge on the applicability, the transferability and the generalisability of the material, and that to allow them to do this, “it is paramount that sufficient evidence is provided by the researcher for the analytic generalizations to be made” (Kvale, 1999: 108).

In an attempt to suggest how this material might be relevant I offer a metaphor borrowed from alchemy. Everyone remembers certain O-level or GCSE chemistry demonstrations. There is a particularly memorable one using sodium; like me, I hope many will remember when their science teacher cut through the metal with a knife, and watched as the shiny surface dulled in front of their eyes (exactly what happens with silver, my teacher explained, but more quickly) – or, more spectacularly, how the same metal fizzed, popped and burst into flame when dropped into water. These were just examples of reactions – reactions at different speeds and in different ways, but reactions none-the-less; sodium reacts violently, silver more slowly, gold even more slowly. Interpersonal psychology, and the teacher in the classroom,

may be thought of perhaps a little like that: some people react more quickly than others – but even gold can be made to combine with other elements.

Notwithstanding the fact that I became a teacher as a result of a process of spiritual and psychological self-development, my classroom identity was – however professionally strong and effective it may have been – saturated with unresolved psychological material. Whilst my own story is particular, it seems probable that many other teachers will have their own shadow motivations for joining the profession: unresolved, unexplored but none-the-less active parts of their psychology that co-exist with their professional personae. Nothing in either my initial teacher education or my continuing professional development helped me process, engage or understand these aspects of what I was as a teacher.

I suggest that this is true for others in the profession.

PART IV

CONCLUSION:

THE RELEVANCE TO TEACHING

Chapter 10

The Relevance to Teaching

Introduction

In this final chapter, I first present a summary of what has been included so far in this thesis; I then look at the potential use of this work to others in teaching and education.

Part I focused on framing the project, explaining the motivation to investigate how clinical psychoanalytic phenomena are at play in normal interactions in schools, and locating the project within current knowledge and in qualitative research methodology. After an introductory **Chapter 1**, **Chapters 2 and 3** offered, respectively, a survey of ‘Terms, Concepts and the Importance of a Psychodynamic Approach’, and ‘History and Context: Teaching’s Relationship with Psychoanalysis’. These two chapters thus provided a literature review, presenting the key concepts and terms used, and a critical review of relevant work in the fields of psychoanalysis, Jungian psychology and psychodynamics, including an historical survey which looked at teaching’s ‘on/off’ relationship with psychoanalysis and related ideas. This was aimed at locating the study, positioning the thesis in response to the initial

research interest, and establishing the theoretical foundations that informed the research.

Chapter 2 also framed the project in Jungian psychoanalysis (also known as Analytical Psychology), and provided an explanation of the key Jungian concepts that inform the thesis. It clarified differences between Jungian and post-Jungian approaches to the unconscious, and provided an outline of Jungian approaches to transference and how these might be distinguished from Freudian theory. It also discussed differences between the psychoanalytic and the psychodynamic and how Kleinian Object Relations theory can be integrated with Jungian theoretical frameworks. Chapter 3 progressed the general summary of the key issues in psychoanalysis and related psychologies to look at how these ideas have impacted on education studies, and explored education as a ‘psychoanalytic’ endeavour. **Chapter 4** discussed the broad methodological and ethical issues presented by an inherently complex area of research. It also included a summary of certain methodological discussions in psycho-social studies, and positioned this thesis in that field.

Parts II and III presented the primary data that had been created during the research project and its analysis. **Part II** presented a methodological defence of co-authorship (**Chapter 5**), and offered in **Chapter 6** a co-authored narrative, suggesting this as one possible method that might afford the possibility of exploring psychodynamic aspects of teaching and learning. The focus of this part, one could therefore say, was on the experience of other teachers.

In contrast, **Part III**, through the use of psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography, provided data about and analysis of my subjective experience of ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching’, and explored in more detail how my own psychology was at play in my life as a teacher. **Chapter 7**

presented a methodological defence of the use of autoethnography in this study. **Chapter 8** examined autoethnographic material about my subjective experience of teaching in the context of secondary education, and showed how ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching and learning’ were significant occurrences in my teaching practice. **Chapter 9** used autoethnography to explore my own psychic material, and analysed the psychoanalytic data that surfaced during the didactic analysis that was part of this doctoral research.

This summative and concluding **Part IV** discusses the thesis, and suggests ways in which this project may be of use to other teachers and the wider profession.

The Return of the Question

The thesis set out to explore a set of questions (outlined on pp. 24-25, above):

Were my experiences of classroom relationships actual, or just fantasy?
– were the phenomena I thought I detected in my classroom or in my relationships with the pupils I taught in any way truly ‘psychodynamic’ (in that there was something that happened between me and someone else) or did they emerge entirely from my own psychological material (having, in fact, very little to do with the pupils’ experience of reality)?

If there actually were psychodynamic incidents in my teaching, how could these be written about – what sort of data could be constructed that might support the existence of these phenomena?

Teaching not being clinical psychotherapy, but psychotherapy maybe having something that could help us understand teaching, how could this

boundary (between the clinical and the paedagogical) be safely investigated in an ethical and responsible manner?

Was this material simply my ‘baggage’ or would there be anything from it that might be useful to other teachers, or transferable to other contexts?

Was I an outlier, a single case, a data set of 1?

To what degree has the project has been able to answer these questions?

Were there such things as ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching’? Rhiannon’s story and my own ‘Four Emails’ invite readers to agree with me that there are moments in the relationships between people in schools when the ‘experience-near’ psychodynamic phenomena of resistance, defences against anxiety, conflict, object-relations, containment, attachment, transference/counter-transference, the therapeutic (or teaching) alliance, and fantasy are at play in normal teaching and learning relationships. Rhiannon’s narrative – and the analysis we agreed between us – is rich in material about the ‘difficult’ territory of resistance, defence, anxiety, conflict and splitting: it is shot through with symbolic threats, knives (actual and fantasised), broken communication, unexplained absences, and uncontained, projected, fear. In my autoethnographic account, the data suggest that for pupils like ‘Eve’, ‘Tara’, ‘Esther’ and ‘Akasi’, the relational basis of what teaching *is* was important in their life in school (as it was for me), as is evidenced by what they wrote to me to express gratitude for⁸²: pupils value it when their teachers invest in the relationship with them – and that relationship can (as Tara suggests) have a positive psychodynamic value, in containing difficult psychic material, or creating a symbolic space in which psychodrama can be

⁸² In Akasi’s case, of course, her gratitude was passed on by a friend.

played out. As the case of Esther shows, the relationship between teacher and pupil can take on a quasi-therapeutic quality, and trouble the boundary between ‘therapy’ and ‘pastoral care’ – and this can be something valued by the pupil concerned, just as it was numinous and valued in the life of the teacher. However, I fully recognise that the limitations of the research design mean that I am restricted in what I can say about how the pupils themselves experienced this process: I can still only represent psychodynamic incidents as I have experienced them. Nonetheless, the evidence of the correspondence from past pupils supports my argument that the relational had an importance to them that mirrored the importance I gave to it; the other data argue for an understanding that events and experiences which were psychodynamic happened in the lives of others, as well. Deploying a Critical Realist understanding of depth ontology to the primary material presented in Chapters 7 and 9 makes it possible to assert that the data offered there provide evidence of actual events and empirical experiences (Scott, 2000: 14). These may point by inference, implication or abduction to the (critical realist) real domain of systems and mechanisms, but this can only be at the level of theory.

How could these be written about? Whilst the project proved to be demanding in many methodological respects, the actual process of writing about ‘psychodynamic incidents in teaching’ (that is to say, getting words on the page) was surprisingly rapid: once Rhiannon and I had established a shared understanding about the nature of the enquiry, the narrative came very quickly, and the story presented in Chapter 6 was largely the result of one forty-minute interview. My own ‘psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography’ was also written swiftly: the elements that looked back at my relationship with pupils were written with pleasure – the other sections with more mixed emotions. Nonetheless, both pieces of writing were composed with fluidity and without blockages. Key to this apparent

spontaneity are, in my view, the years of therapy that will have changed me, the habits of reflective practice that teachers are trained to foster and the specific experience of the psychoanalytic training that was factored into the project (including the frame of didactic analysis): ‘difficult’ material became less difficult to write about because it had been ‘thought-felt’ within clinical psychoanalytic contexts.

How could this boundary (between the clinical and the paedagogical) be safely investigated in an ethical and responsible manner? Two methods have thus evolved out of this work and are offered for use by others working in schools and education.

1. Psychoanalytically-informed co-authorship:

texts are co-authored, with one writer located in a school or relevant educational context (bringing the core narrative material to the process), and the other sufficiently schooled in psychoanalytic theory and practice to bring that theoretical interest to the partnership; in this model, one of the writers is in a didactic analysis, and the co-authorship partnership provides a space to discuss and process complex psychodynamic material.

2. Psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography:

in this method, a teacher explores the relational and psychodynamic aspects of teaching and learning, as experienced in their own professional life, using the methodological and ethical frameworks of autoethnography. Such an approach could be developed within a master’s level education programme or other CPD provision – again, it is important in my view (even for experienced practitioners) that in addition to didactic analysis, the

writer has a collaborator, tutor or reviewer to act as a 'safe space' in which to unpack the material that comes to the surface.

Partnership of some form and didactic analysis underpins both methods. Both are, I think, key to making the process as 'safe' as possible. The clinical containment aspect afforded by didactic analysis should be backed up with an approach to the writing process in which the writer/teacher/researcher is never working wholly alone on a text: the writing partnership aspect allows the complex relational and psychoanalytic material can be unpicked, and provides an alternative perspective that can question, raise concerns, support and listen. This insight is based on the experience of having written about psychodynamic incidents, and an awareness of how challenging and disturbing some of the material that comes to the surface can be.

For some, this approach will be overcautious. I am again conscious of the comment made to me by one of my colleagues, in the early stages of this project, that psychoanalytic processes are "not witchcraft", but part of normal life. Notwithstanding the fact that psychoanalytic processes *are* indeed part of normal life, asking particular questions in particular ways does have the capacity to release powerful forces (certainly, libidinous and aggressive ones), and potentially repressed or denied material. This is what Freud, Jung and Spielrein discovered in their triadic transference/counter-transference relationship at the start of the last century. This sort of psycho-social inquiry (one that is on the boundary of clinical practice) therefore needs some sort of clinical or quasi-clinical containment because it is something different to a 'standard' psycho-social research project.

Am I a data set of 1? Is my interest in this territory rooted in an idiosyncratic personal concern that might not have any use to other teachers? I am a particular case, but I do not think I am alone: it seems legitimate to argue from the data presented

in this thesis that other teachers will be comparably affected by the archetypal psychodynamic processes that have been described in this project – to different degrees, and in different ways.

Teaching: Human and Relational

Everyone has baggage: what matters is how much of it are we carrying, how much of it is in storage in left luggage, how much of it is in the way on the platform for people to trip over, and how much of it do we ask others to carry for us. As I've already noted, Philip Riley's research appears to suggest that teachers may enter the profession with a degree of active attachment material significantly more marked than in the mainstream population. One wonders how much does the unconscious operation of all this contribute to the burnout and turnover that are currently such significant features of the profession in England.

The point about all this is that “teaching is not a purely cognitive, informative, experience, it is also an emotional, erotical experience” (Felman, 1982: 35), it is difficult, messy and fundamentally relational, because “knowing and learning are bound up in the unconscious emotional flows of relationships” (Bibby, 2009: 52) and what happens is at its core about how the teacher relates to the child, and what circulates around that relationship.

Sometimes this is very positive. John Tieman relates his struggles maintaining a relationship/learning-relationship with his pupil 'E.T.': it took a lot of effort, but ultimately proved successful for both of them:

We had a lot of long talks, E. T. and I. I learned a lot. I learned how to take the kid aside, discipline him, and also make sure that ‘You and I are still cool, right?’ I learned to address the misbehaviour, but not attack the person. I learned from E. T. to listen to the relationship, to the feelings between us. I learned to listen to his transference, particularly his longing for a father, and the anger he projected on me, the father figure, the only stable male in his life. I learned to listen to my counter-transference. Why do I feel like a scolding father? Or worse, a shaming father? I learned to listen for warning signs. Why do I want to recommend E. T. be suspended, transferred, expelled? And above all other things, I learned that, whatever the tensions, the primary standard is to maintain the relationship. So we had a lot of long talks.

The story has a happy ending. E. T. – his name is Mark – looked me up a semester ago. He’s in the junior college. And while I can’t take credit for the full edifice that is his life, I can take credit for a brick or two.

(Tieman, 2007: 54)

Usually, this process is challenging: bold, confident adolescents might present personae that make them appear to be more mature than they are, as ‘near-adult’ or something ‘not-child’ but, as Clio Stearns reminds us, these children are *still children*: “children with real needs, vulnerabilities, and even terror regarding the ways they viewed themselves as inadequate. A well-cloaked, defended loss is still a loss” (Stearns, 2013a: 13). In other words, teachers are forced, daily, to work in vortices of love, hate, terror, power, desire, rage, arousal.

This is a curious professional reality, and preparation for which is not an explicit part of initial teacher education or continuing professional development. Here is John Tieman again on this aspect of teachers’ identities:

As educators, we are trained to be empathetic – in two words, to love. But there is little in our training that helps us look into ourselves, to truly open ourselves, to open ourselves to the full range of emotions, to ask about our own motivations, to accept ourselves and all that has made us. In three words, to love ourselves. (Tieman, 2007: 55)

Tieman comes from a Christian perspective; it appears to me that the love he is thus focusing on is agápe/caritas (rather than éros, philía or storge).

Tieman might be criticised for being over idealistic here because, as Catherine Ryther reminds us, “it is also important to recognise that the psychoanalytic tradition, when applied to teaching, allows us to experience and value hate, as much as love” (Ryther, 2016) – a point Jung and the Jungians make in numerous places about the duality at the centre of human experience, and the rôle of the shadow in our psychology (the precise theology of this argument lies outside this thesis).

Feelings – all feelings, including the painful and difficult ones – are interwoven with learning, and the alternative is to deny this interconnectedness, which simply results in reducing learning to “unsatisfying, disconnected knowledge” (Bibby, 2009: 52). And yet so many teachers find that despite their attempts to function *relationally*, they are trying to do so in a policy framework or culture of learning that either denies the value of the relational, or is set up actively to negate or undermine it – a point Bridget Hamre has recently made (Hughes, 2018). This situation is what underlies Edward Pajak’s assertion (after Alice Miller) that what industrialised societies currently perform is a kind of “poisonous paedagogy”, based on a “narcissistic parenting and education that aims to break a child’s will”, and that “much of what is done in schools today in the name of education reform has more to do with meeting the needs and interests of adults than with meeting the needs of children” (Pajak, 2011: 2024). This systemic narcissism is indicated by

expectations of perfection in children, particularly with regard to intellect; a grandiose sense of superiority and entitlement; relentless fault-finding; projection of personal fantasies onto children; an absence of empathy for children and their needs; a preoccupation with control; conditional approval; and a well-intentioned view of their own self-centred motives and insensitive actions as being beneficial for children. (Pajak, 2011: 2025)

Pajak is writing about the education system in the USA, but the reality for teachers working in England is similarly bleak, and Tamara Bibby's comment that "the difficult work of finding ways of thinking and talking non-judgementally about the unconscious aspects of paedagogic relationships has a long history but does not sit well in the current English policy context" (2009: 51) remains a fair comment about the British context, even ten and more years after she first made it.

As I've previously noted, Pajak argues further that educators should recognise the political challenge that this situation represents for teachers, suggesting that if we don't want to remain part of a process that legitimises a destructive system we should support urgent change, change which "must begin from within oneself" (Pajak, 2011: 2038) (because it is unlikely to come from elsewhere). This call for teachers to engage in personal psychoanalytic inquiry *in response to* systematic or theoretical psychoanalytic logic connects with Britzman and Pitt's assertion that teachers are under an "ethical obligation" to "learn about their own conflicts and to control the re-enactment of old conflicts that appear in the guise of new paedagogical encounters" (Britzman and Pitt, 1996: 118).⁸³ Psychoanalytic knowledge confronts both the system and the individual teacher, offering new ways of thinking, new ways of

⁸³ First drawn to my attention by Clio Stearns in her 2015 article.

learning, new ways of being – and yet is so often greeted with rejection or denial.

Why is this so? Why is this rich, complex literature just so much ‘disavowed knowledge’? Well, maybe we should “never underestimate the power of denial” (Ball, 1999), or perhaps it is because of the inherent difficulties and demands involved. And maybe, as Tamara Bibby suggests, “it is not surprising that teachers withdraw from the difficulties presented by doing emotional work with so many people every day” (2009: 53); perhaps, too, it is not surprising that the system prefers to turn aside from that which it dare not see.

The UK Context

The past decade has seen a growth in concern about mental health in schools, reflected in the recent emergence of the acronym ‘SEMH’, or ‘Social, Emotional and Mental Health’ as a professional concept to parallel SEND⁸⁴ and ASC.⁸⁵ In 2018, the *Times Educational Supplement* (‘TES’) ran a number of articles in its issue of 30 November, including one reporting on the findings of the 2017 NHS survey of 9,000 young people, *Mental Health of Children and Young People in England*. In this article, one of the project’s investigators, Tamsin Ford, reported on its key findings: 2017 had seen an increase in mental health conditions in children and young people, with the survey reporting mental health conditions prevalent in 5.5 percent of two to four year-olds, 9.5 percent of five to ten year-olds, 14.4 percent of eleven to sixteen year-olds, and 16.9 percent of seventeen to nineteen year-olds.

⁸⁴ Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

⁸⁵ Autistic Spectrum Conditions (in some places the less neuro-diverse ASD, Autistic Spectrum Disorders).

Within those data, a shocking 22.4 percent of sixteen to nineteen year-old girls and young women present with what Ford terms ‘emotional disorders’ (Ford, 2018: 26-27) – that is to say, nearly a quarter of our young women of school age are in some form of clinical mental distress.

It is also now increasingly clear that this situation will have deteriorated during the COVID-19 lock-down, with reports that “One in four UK young people have felt ‘unable to cope’ during [the] pandemic” (Hill, 2021). The Anna Freud Centre has tracked an accumulating body of other evidence that there has been a growth in depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions amongst young people during the pandemic, and that minoritised children and young people are disproportionately affected (Jeffery *et al.*, 2021).

All of this has certain implications for the school system in England: teachers are often the first point of contact for young people with mental health conditions (Ford, 2018: 27), and current deficits in the provision of mental health support for all but those who demonstrate the most extreme behaviour mean that our young are either turning increasingly to their schools for support, or acting out their distress in ever more serious ways in order to get support (Severs, 2018: 24; Mroz, 2018: 3). So, whilst it appears that teachers and schools remain “the most common ‘service’ contacted within the previous year about mental health”, with “contact with teachers [...] reported by 48.5 percent of those with a mental disorder” (Ford, 2018: 26-27), it has to be questioned whether schools are adequately prepared to deal with this demand. Ann Mroz, in her editorial in that issue of the journal, lamented the lack of training for teachers and schools in how to deal with the mental health needs of pupils, and went on to commend increased knowledge of neuropsychology, citing the work of Sarah-Jayne Blakemore and colleagues (Mroz, 2018: 3). Whilst I agree that knowledge of how the brain works can only make us better teachers (and I have drawn on this fascinating emerging cognitive neuroscience

myself in my own research and professional practice), there is a risk that the call to assist distressed children through better knowing how the brain works represents the continued re-enactment of a Cartesian myth. It also represents a splitting-off of the intersubjective reality of what happens in the classroom, and fails fully to answer exactly *why* children choose to bring their mental health crises to their teachers (rather than their GP, their parents, or any other responsible adult). Unfortunately, as Tamara Bibby argues,

our culture is not one that prioritises a focus on relationships and relationality and [...] schools reflect this general trend. Further, because of the pressures from outside, and the power imbalance that comes with age differentials, this may even be magnified in schools. (Bibby, 2009: 43)

In December 2018, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, Amanda Spielman, was reported to assert that "schools cannot be substitute parents", and it was implied that English Ministers were being warned not to load schools with the duties of protecting children from a range of social ills, from knife-crime, through obesity, to inadequate potty-training (Savage, 2018). However, teachers simply *are* substitute parents – it's just what happens: this is something recognised in law, in the idea of teachers and others with responsibility being *in loco parentis*. It appears also that some children do want teachers to play that "far more central rôle" (Haste, 2013: 530), with the concomitant elevated psychic presence in their lives – something I argue is supported by the data and the analysis presented in this thesis. Similarly, schools are simply 'emotional places' and a range of research and evidence-informed practices can help us get better at understanding what happens.

The editor of the *TES* may suggest that the solution to all this lies, "happily", in "Sarah-Jayne Blakemore's lab" (Mroz, 2018: 3), but I don't agree that

solutions to teaching problems will entirely be found in laboratories. What will help teachers more is ways of thinking about emotions, such as Louise Gilbert's experiments which use parenting psychology and attachment theory to create successful manualised interventions in the management of emotions (Quaine, 2018: 36-38), or the outreach work of the Mulberry Tree School (Roberts, 2020), or the work of organisations such as the Attachment Aware Schools Network (Attachment Aware Schools Network, 2021), and that of the Trauma Informed Schools Network (Trauma Informed Schools UK, 2021).

Meaningful relationships also impact measurably on learning. John Hattie (2009) reports the mean effect size of positive teacher-pupil relationships was 0.72, ranking it 12th in his list of 138 influences that make for better learning (Riley, 2012: 3). A striking fact, but probably not widely known in England.

Next Steps

I conclude that the psychoanalytic tradition has a lot to offer teaching and education. I am not alone in this, but, as argued in Chapter 3, this knowledge is repeatedly forgotten, disavowed, even repressed. I am convinced that a familiarity with psychodynamic processes can make teachers more effective, by enabling them to be more connected to their own interior lives (and how elements of these are projected into the classroom and 'into' pupils), and, in consequence, changing the way that they present themselves to their pupils.

Tentatively, towards the end of the research process, I began to share some of the research with others. On one occasion (Friday 23 March 2018), I used some of it in a session with some beginner teachers, in an optional extension

seminar following a formative assessment workshop. My notes show that those beginner teachers responded by exploring how the school functions as a “frame” around relationships, how silence is sometimes the only appropriate response to difficult material, and how teaching is very close to psychoanalytic clinical practices, because it “is about creating a space where things can be experimented with, where people can become into being”. One of the beginner teachers came up to me after the session and told me that the discussion about psychodynamic incidents in teaching had been his favourite of the whole process of his ITE⁸⁶ (though, I should note out that it was only March at that point). I record this (the voluntary attendance and engagement in an entirely optional seminar about psychodynamic processes in teaching, and the highly positive comment from one of the twenty or so teachers there) not in an attempt to self-promote, but to support the argument that there *is* an interest out there in the profession to explore this material, and that for some, it represents a hunger for ways of thinking about teaching and learning that are not currently prominent aspects of the discourse.

In another example, my notes capture how psychoanalytic clinical insights helped me help a colleague who was struggling to understand why the teaching placement of a competent, effective beginner teacher was breaking down:⁸⁷

Conversation with ST⁸⁸ re BT⁸⁹ – her 2nd placement seems to have broken down ... she was unable to listen to the feedback from her mentor. Conversation rolls around a bit. It emerges that she’s having difficulties with her 12-year-old who refuses to go to school.

Conversation rolls around a bit. How can she be expected to learn in

⁸⁶ Field note, 4 Apr 2018.

⁸⁷ Minor changes to the original text and date elided to assist in anonymisation.

⁸⁸ A colleague, ‘School Tutor’.

⁸⁹ A beginner teacher.

such circumstances, I ask? to take on new ideas about her self, when her self is so threatened? I have a moment of insight, I offer the interpretation that a transference is in play: mother and child are in conflict at home (and the mother cannot listen to the child /vice versa); at work, this relational material has been transferred, unconsciously, and institutional mother and child cannot listen or hear each other. ST says “that just captures everything”⁹⁰ “I agree with everything you just said”.⁹¹

Through the application of psychoanalytically-informed teaching practice, the issue became understood as not being about the competence of the beginner teacher (it was her second placement) but about a possible transference of material from the teacher’s home life into the context of the school – this shifted the quality of the tutorial interventions from the University, and changed the outcomes for the teacher concerned.

It is quite striking that teachers – burdened now with so many legal duties and all the responsibilities that fall from being the focus of so many young people’s lives – are not systematically provided with professional containment processes. There are, however, at least two recent projects which have explored providing supervision for headteachers – one run by Leeds Beckett University (Lofthouse, 2020), and another run by Barnardo’s Scotland (Lawrence, 2020). These projects have, however, focused on headteachers, rather than classroom practitioners. Such supervision is, as is widely known, central to social work practice, and psychodynamic theory has informed supervisory groups in other professions. In *the Doctor, His Patient and the Illness* (1957), Michael and Enid Ballint present clinical data where it is clear that though the patient might visit their family doctor complaining about their knee or their chest or whatever, what the patient may really be seeking from

⁹⁰ Noted contemporaneously.

⁹¹ Note recorded “18’ after end of conversation”.

the doctor is a relationship, through which other things can be processed, understood ... or learnt. From this insight, the Ballints eventually developed 'Ballint Groups', in which doctors met to discuss this sort of material, and so better contain the counter-transference. It may be possible to construct such Ballint Groups for classroom teachers, and so improve retention, relieve stress and improve the quality of classroom teaching, by giving teachers a wider, stronger, deeper repertoire of tools to understand the powerful forces at play in day-to-day classroom teaching.⁹²

This project has also devised two usable methods through which it is possible for teachers to explore the workings of psychodynamic processes in their classroom practice: psychoanalytically-informed co-authorship and psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography. Both of these approaches create narratives, and narratives are readable – and that, as Art Bochner points out, is important:

We pay a steep price for producing texts that sustain the illusion of disinterest and neutrality by keeping the personal voice out. Our work is under-read, undergraduates find many of our publications boring, graduate students say our scholarship is dry and inaccessible, seasoned scholars confess they don't finish half of what they start reading, and the public hardly knows we exist (Richardson, 1994: 516-529). Oh, we've learned to rationalize these responses, but we know in our hearts we would like them to be different. We do a good job of protecting our secrets-hiding our embarrassment – but we are troubled by how few of us carry a passion for theory and research into our 40s and 50s and 60s and how many of us have lost the excitement and liveliness we once had.

⁹² I am grateful to Professor Sonu Shamsadhani and Dr Martin Liebscher (both of UCL), who suggested the applicability of the Ballints' work to education during a meeting in 2018.

We've seen the casualties of an alienated workforce up close, etched on the blank faces of colleagues who caved in, gave up, stopped caring. This, too, is a moral crisis, an epidemic of institutional depression. We turn the other cheek, keep quiet, pretend the moral crisis isn't there, but that doesn't make it disappear. (Bochner, 1997: 433)

Both psychoanalytically-informed co-authorship and psychoanalytically-informed autoethnography afford the possibility of creating readable narratives which could help teachers recognise 'psychodynamic incidents' in their teaching, and open-up to wider participation in the teaching profession opportunities either to read or to write about psychoanalytic ideas in mainstream schooling. I hope that others might find these methods useful, and I look forward to collaborating with other teachers in creating other co-authored narratives about how psychodynamic processes are at play in their schools.

The 'troubling' of the border between clinical and teaching processes continues to interest me professionally. One logical next step from this project is that I follow the example of a small number of writers in this area (Deborah Britzman, Sasha Roseneil, Julie Walsh, for example) and pursue a clinical training. This would deepen my ability to work in this area, strengthen the ethical frame around the work, develop a 'habitus' of professional identity, and represent an 'activist' approach to the issues explored in this thesis, positioning myself in a considered, professional manner at the psycho-social boundary of education and clinical practice.

There is also potentially more for me to write about my own teaching experiences. I am conscious that the examples from my school teaching presented earlier in this thesis are positive ones, with descriptions of my practice that put me in a good light; but the reader needs to know that I am

very clear that I also made mistakes, got things wrong, sometimes badly wrong. It's simply that a significant section of this thesis became structured around the serendipitous arrival of four messages that were positive about my classroom practice. Maybe my accounts of my classroom mistakes can be the focus of another study. After all, one of the leitmotifs of Jungian symbolism is duality: the sun and the moon, the light and the dark, the black *and* the white (in contrast to the paranoid-schizoid's black-or-white view of the world). It is impossible to live with any honesty unless one acknowledges the presence and impact of one's own shadow; and teaching involves these darker aspects as well (the presence of which in normal school life will, I think, be obvious from Rhiannon's narrative, if readers were not already aware). I know I made mistakes, it is no doubt possible for others to learn from my mistakes as well.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SAP Foundations Course 2014-15

SAP FOUNDATIONS COURSE, 2014-15

- 1 October 2014: 'Jung the Man', Lucinda Hawkins
- 8 October 2014: 'the Shadow', Christopher Perry
- 15 October 2014: 'the Self', Warren Coleman
- 22 October 2014: 'Complexes and Archetypes', Clare Landgrebe
- 5 November 2014: 'Anima and Animus', Inge Spencer
- 12 November 2014: 'Alchemy', Robert Withers
- 19 November 2014: 'the Ego-Self Relationship', Christina Driver
- 26 November 2014: 'Jungian Perspectives on dissociation and psychosis', Maggie McAlister
- 3 December 2014: 'Transference and Counter-transference', Jan Wiener
- 14 January 2015: 'Why Intensive Analysis', Katherine Killick
- 21 January 2015: 'Analytical Psychology and the Body', Bob Withers
- 28 January 2015: 'Post Jungian Infant Development Theory', Elizabeth Urban
- 4 February 2015: 'Neurobiology, Trauma and Jung', Marcus West
- 11 February 2015: 'the Transcendent Function', Judith Brech
- 25 February 2015: 'Active Imagination, Amplification and Music', Annushka Shani & Wendy Maier
- 4 March 2015: 'Dreams', Ali Zarbafi
- 11 March 2015: 'Synchronicity', Roderick Main
- 18 March 2015: 'Spirituality', Jay Barlow
- 25 March 2015: 'Individuation', Martin Schmidt
- 22 April 2015: 'Models of the Self', Warren Colman
- 29 April 2015: 'Exploring Object Relations', William Meredith-Owen
- 6 May 2015: 'the Unconscious', Susanna Wright
- 13 May 2015: 'Birth to Infancy', Judith Woodhead
- 20 May 2015: 'Childhood', Elizabeth Urban

- 3 June 2015: 'Adolescence', Marica Rytovaara
- 10 June 2015: 'Young Adulthood', Clare Landgrebe
- 17 June 2015: 'Mid-Life', Martin Schmidt
- 24 June 2015: 'Mature Life', Malcolm Rushton
- 1 July 2015: 'Old Age & Death Terminus and/or Opportunity',
Peter Addenbrooke

APPENDIX B

2015 Information Sheet & Consent Documentation

INFORMATION SHEET

PSYCHODYNAMIC AND RELATIONAL PROCESSES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. I am conducting research at the UCL Institute of Education, University of London, leading to the award of a PhD degree. I am looking for a small number of teachers to help me in this project by writing with me narratives about their experiences of life in school.

2. The area of the investigation is the use of psychoanalytic theory and practice to understand relationships in teaching and learning in secondary schools. The current research question is:

how (or how far) do unconscious and relational processes shape or determine the educational process (what people want to learn and how it happens) in a school setting, as experienced by the cases in the sample?

3. Put into extremely simple terms, this is an investigation into the degree to which feelings and relationships are a normal (maybe fundamental) part of teaching and learning. It is also, in some sense, therefore, an investigation into the very purpose of education.

4. I will use the theory and language of Jungian psychology and psychoanalysis⁹³ to describe and understand these feelings and relationships. Some of these feelings and relationships may be challenging or awkward, and for that reason I have decided to work with adults—the teacher half of the teaching and learning relationship—and use teachers' experiences of the classroom to construct subjective narratives of classroom and school life.

5. I am looking for a small sample of teachers to write with me co-authored narratives arising out of their classroom experience, through which we will be able to explore how key ideas in psychoanalysis can be used to understand teaching and learning relationships.

6. The co-authored chapters would loosely follow the model offered by Roziek and his collaborators, principally that outlined in Sconiers and Roziek's 'Voices Inside Schools' (2000). Iteratively, through dialogue and collaboration, we would produce a single piece of writing in which it is likely to be impossible to distinguish one writer's voice from the other's. This narrative which I write with you will form one of a number (between

⁹³ 'Psychoanalysis' is used broadly to include the approach to the unconscious of Jung, Sigmund Freud, Klein, Adler, Anna Freud, and their successors. In using the term, I'm not attempting to distinguish between the different (and sometimes warring) psychoanalytical traditions; but the term 'psychoanalysis' assumes a different approach to the mind from 'experimental psychology' or 'psychiatry'. The particular approach that Jung established is sometimes distinguished as 'analytical psychology', 'Jungian psychoanalysis' or just 'Jungian'.

three and six) written in collaboration with other teachers. Each of these co-authored narrative will be of around 5,000 words.

7. If successfully completed, this piece of writing will form the data which is explored in the PhD dissertation. The other elements of the PhD, including commentary on the ideas themes and issues raised in the co-authored chapter/s, will be written solely by me. These other chapters will include the literature review, ethics and methodology, and the other chapters that are required for the purposes of the examination. These can all be shared with you at any point in the process if you wish.

HOW WILL PSYCHOANALYSIS BE WOVEN INTO THE WRITING?

8. It could be argued that the key point of psychoanalysis is the encounter with the unconscious: the method of inquiry is informed by this quest to make conscious things that are unconscious. I propose that we do this together, by bringing ideas to consciousness through jointly authored stories. The core of our work together, therefore, will be to construct our collaboration through a series of unstructured conversations, which will (certainly at the start of the process) be recorded and transcribed. The transcripts will be exchanged, and each subsequent meeting will start by exploring the themes and issues that arise in the transcripts. In this way I hope to create a space for unconscious material to be made conscious.

9. We will continue to exchange drafts until we agree that the narrative has been satisfactorily completed.

HOW WILL THIS WORK BE CONDUCTED?

10. I expect the collaboration to take place through a series of meetings and exchanges of drafts over a six-month period or so, or (by agreement) a shorter or longer period. I expect that we will meet at least monthly. The process of co-authoring will be conducted in three phases:

- a. **Phase 1:** exploring together the ethics of the inquiry;
- b. **Phase 2:** framing the narrative (generating stories and themes);
- c. **Phase 3:** writing the narrative.

11. **Phase 1 (exploring the ethics)** will consist of a semi-structured discussion or discussions about the ethics of this inquiry and our relationship. We will start by discussing this agreement and its implications. Then we will develop the frame of our partnership through a discussion of some ethical questions about research, based on the work of Edwards and Mautner (2002). These questions are attached as Annex A. I expect we will return to these questions through the project, and it is my intention that we formally review them around half-way, and before ending. These conversations will be recorded, transcribed and exchanged.

12. **Phase 2 (framing the narrative)** is a series of unstructured, recorded and transcribed interviews. In Phase 2, we will generate the ideas that will become the material (the themes and stories) to be woven into the co-authored narrative (which will be constructed in Phase 3). I suggest that we open the dialogue through the exchange and discussion of a short text, article or chapter which we have each chosen. The suggested criterion for the selection of the text is 'something important' or 'something that explores a key idea' which seems relevant or interesting. This process should will generate stories about the classroom or school. These conversations will be recorded, transcribed and exchanged, providing the core material to be made into the narrative through the process of editing and writing in Phase 3.

13. **Phase 3 (writing the narrative)** will be the process of collaborative writing. After a number of the recorded, unstructured conversations in Phase 2, and when mutually agreeable, we will agree to focus on a number of emerging themes and stories, which one or either or both of us will begin to draft into a narrative, or story. I expect this to be a process of collating the material generated in the unstructured discussions in Phase 2 and editing and expanding them fit into a coherent, single narrative. It may be that you do the bulk of the writing initially, and I respond to your draft by reshaping it; or it maybe that I start, and you edit my work. The objective is to create a narrative that arises out of your teaching context, but which allows us to understand elements of psychodynamic processes at play there. In very crude terms, you bring the teaching, I bring the psychodynamic theory, and we create a third thing through the narrative that emerges in the space between us.

HOW LONG WILL THIS TAKE?

14. I expect the narratives will take a few months to write, involving a series of meetings and conversations over probably six months or so. We will start with a conversation about our relationship, setting boundaries and exploring the ethics of what we're involved in; I expect this to take one hour. Then we will have a series of conversations about ideas and about what's happening at school; this may take two, three or four meetings of about an hour each, until we feel it's ready to move on to the process of writing. Finally, out of the recordings of our conversations, between us, we will draft a story presenting the material that has arisen in our dialogues. This could be very straight forward—being a process of editing together verbatim extracts—or it could be a complicated one of drafting and redrafting: I expect this third stage to be very much like a workshop undertaken remotely, with some meetings as we feel may or may not be necessary. I do not want this process to become a burden; if it does, we should stop.

WHAT IF THIS PROCESS UNEARTHS SOME DIFFICULT IDEAS OR FEELINGS?

15. It is possible that this inquiry might explore some difficult ideas, feelings, or relationships. In part, that's the very point of the inquiry, and I

hope that we will be able to work through these issues together. But if it gets too much, please remember that you can withdraw from this process at any point.

16. If you want to withdraw from this process, and don't feel you can tell me, you can approach my supervisor, Dr Able, a.able@ioe.ac.uk, telephone number 020 7612 2345.

17. If the process brings to the surface issues you need support with, the Teacher Support Line is available on 08000 562 561; if you wish to explore material in more depth, the Society for Analytical Psychology has a clinic based in Swiss Cottage, which can be contacted on 020 7419 8898: low-cost options are available for those on reduced incomes. A wider range of psychoanalytically trained therapists can be found at www.bpc.org.uk/find-a-therapist.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN WRITERS

1. This is an agreement between me, Ambrose Hogan, and you _____ about how we will conduct research together.

CONSENT

2. This inquiry sets out to explore our experience of psychodynamic forces in schools and the education system; these may include (but are not limited to) projection, transference, counter transference, projective identification, hate and love, neuroses, paranoia and the psychotic.

3. In taking part in this process you consent to write a narrative with me about your experience in school or teaching; it is expected that the material we write will be interwoven with ideas emerging from it that connect with psychoanalytic theory, specifically, Jungian and post-Jungian approaches to the unconscious.

4. You have the right to withdraw from this process, up to the point at which the narrative is considered by both of us complete, and it is included in the PhD thesis as a discrete piece of data.

5. At the point at which we both consider the narrative is complete, we will agree to 'sign it off', and exchange emails or letters to agree

a. that the narrative is complete; and

b. that the whole text of the completed narrative, as it stands, can be included in the PhD as an annex, appendix, or other discrete section as appreciate.

6. You and I will share the ownership of the co-authored narratives; in participating in this process, you also consent to the inclusion of the co-authored texts, in their entirety, in the PhD submission.

7. You also consent to the publication in book form of the PhD or a text substantially based on it, including either the whole of our co-authored narrative or substantial extracts from it. In this circumstance, I acknowledge your right to appropriate royalties or other payment (see the section 'PUBLICATION', below).

8. After the narrative is complete, it will be included in the PhD submission. Your participation in this process gives me your permission to submit the PhD including as part of it the agreed text of our co-authored narrative, and have copies deposited in libraries and available for public access in accordance with university regulations.

9. Should you wish to publish yourself anything arising out of the data or process, you consent to wait until the submission of the PhD to do so (this is to prevent prior publication of elements of the PhD invalidating the text of the dissertation for examination).

OWNERSHIP

10. You and I jointly own the co-authored narratives.
11. I own my field notes and other notes, recordings and transcripts.
12. I own the text of the PhD, which will include commentary on and extracts of the co-authored narratives. Our co-authored narrative—clearly identified as such, with due credit to both authors—will be included in the PhD submission as an appendix, annex or as a separate section in some other clearly discrete form.

PUBLICATION

13. It is likely that articles will be the product of this research. If what we write together is used in any article, you will be credited as a co-author (unless you request anonymity or the use of a pseudonym).
14. It is likely that publication will be in academic journals and there will be no payment.
15. In the unlikely event of payment in the case of publication of a single article in an academic or other sort of journal (where an article is defined as a piece of writing of not more than 10,000 words), we will distribute payment for articles on the basis of the following formula:

$$p=c/n,$$

where p=payment to individual author, c=total payment by publishing journal and n=number of credited authors.

16. If royalties are offered, we agree that we will follow the legal advice of the publishers in the division of payments, and that separate legal agreements will cover this aspect. We expect that these agreements will follow the principle that payments will reflect the proportion of the authors' contributions to the whole document.
17. We will discuss together publication if it arises, but the lead on negotiations with publishers will be me, Ambrose Hogan. I will not publish material that we have co-authored without your consent; you agree not to publish material that we have co-authored without my consent, and certainly not before the submission of the PhD for examination.

CONFIDENTIALITY

18. Conversations and interviews as part of this project will be transcribed by a typist who will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.
19. If considered necessary, pseudonyms can be used. However, it is expected that the co-authors will be named and recognised as such and accorded due credit in the text. It may be that as the inquiry unfolds,

material may arise that means that anonymity would be a more suitable way forward. In such a situation, we would work together to structure the narrative so as to make it as hard as possible for you to be identified, without compromising our responsibility to disseminate through the narrative what we have found out together, what has been brought to consciousness.

20. The final decision as to whether the you should be anonymous or not remains with you.

GENERAL

21. You have the right to withdraw from this process at any time, up to the point at which the narrative is considered complete, and becomes data as part of my PhD dissertation.

22. I will archive recordings, transcripts, other data and notes and field notes from this project indefinitely, and they will be kept in my home, or in a locked storage facility.

23. Should you explicitly request, I agree to destroy any holdings I may have of transcripts, recordings or other data that has been constructed with you, or about you, which were constructed as part of this co-authorship project. Please note that this commitment cannot extend to email, items that are transferred by email or other materials passed across the internet, where the archives and holdings will be out of my control. I will maintain my records of any correspondence, be that in written form, email, telephonic text or similar.

24. Clearly, it will not be possible to remove from the public record the narrative once it is submitted as part of the PhD.

25. The co-authored narratives may require the addition of academic references, or other editing for the purposes of the academic writing: I will undertake the responsibility for this part of the work.

SIGNED: _____ Ambrose
Hogan

_____ [other party]

DATE:

REFERENCES

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QUESTIONS FOR ETHICAL DISCUSSION

1. Who are the people involved in and affected by the ethical dilemma raised in the research? (and what are those dilemmas?)
2. What is the context for the dilemmas in terms of the specific topic of the research ... and the issues it raises personally and socially for those involved?
3. Whom am I identifying with, whom am I posing as other, and why?
4. How will those involved understand our actions and are these in balance with our judgement about our own practice?
5. What is the balance of personal and social power between those involved?
6. How will our actions affect relationships between the people involved?
7. What are the specific social and personal locations of the people involved in relation to each other?
8. What are the needs of those involved and how are they inter-related?

