

Extended report of the Autism Observatory of the Eurofederation of Psychoanalysis 2024

At the end of last year, a text by Maleval in *La cause de l'autisme*¹ echoed a resolution issued by the AMA Medical Student Section, which proposed the withdrawal of AMA's support for the ABA method, as a treatment for Autism Spectrum Disorder.

This strongly argued resolution points to the monopoly that this method practically exercises in the US and Canada, as well as the very important economic interests and profit at stake in the autism treatment industry. It also, openly criticises the concept of the autistic child which lies at the foundation of this method and its practice which has been "historically associated with abuse" as serious as "the denial of fundamental rights such as food and hygiene", or as the dominant position adopted by behaviourists in their interventions, which do not consider the child's consent or reduce and replace the child's communication with incentives.

The resolution also provides data detecting harmful and devastating effects in the lives of autistic people subjected to this method and the manifestations of rejection made by autistic persons to the use of this method in autistic children. Also refers to data presented in repeated reports, on the "lack of correlation between improvement of symptoms and duration of ABA treatment".

As Maleval points out, the AMA Congress in June of that year merely opened up the possibility of alternative therapies for autistic people, without excluding ABA to continue being used. However, I believe that the information it provides is of great value: since 2014 and repeatedly year after year, the studies commissioned by the Department of Defense and the US Senate to determine whether the large sums allocated by the State for the treatment of autism with the ABA method are being used appropriately, confirm that the results obtained with this method are "weak" or even "very low".

Maleval reports studies that point out how the lack of high-quality data on intervention in autism, despite decades of research dedicated to the subject, does not prevent clinical guides and funding bodies from continuing to highlight the effectiveness of practices such as ABA. On the one hand, researchers in autism do not finish agreeing on "the threshold of sufficient evidence to affirm that a therapy works", but also, experts indicate that "a system of well-established conflicts of interest has also artificially kept this bar low". As Maleval points out, the *706 AMA's resolution* highlights that: "the financial interests are considerable, so the pressure of the ABA lobbies is accordingly with them. How much longer

¹ <https://cause-autisme.fr/2023/12/04/a-propos-de-la-difference-autistique-de-j-c-maleval/>

will violence against the autistic subject and its spontaneous methods of defence against anxiety be able to rely on scientific arguments, albeit inconsistent?"

The review and study that Jean Claude Maleval has been carrying out, based on a vast volume of documentation and bibliography on autism published in the Anglo-Saxon sphere, is of great help to our Lacanian action in this field.

Moreover, the WHO has also published a series of texts under the title *Package of Interventions for Rehabilitation*, in which, the module nr 5 is dedicated to *Neurodevelopmental Disorders*² with a distinction between those aimed at *Autism spectrum disorders*, and those aimed at *Disorders of intellectual development*. This noticeable trend places autism between the neuro and disability. It is from this movement, in its epistemic, clinical and political incidence, that we must draw the consequences. Reading the diagrams linking the evaluation of a number of functions concerned with certain proposals for intervention; crudely demonstrates the radical erasure of the subject and subjectivity when considering the difficulties of autistic people, their families and treatment options.

In *l'École de la Cause freudienne*

The 3rd CERA's Study Day took place on March 23, 2024 at the Palais des Congrès de Paris Versailles in Issy-les-Moulineaux under the title «Autism for all? ».

We were pleased to welcome 530 people for clinical and theoretical works, as well as the lively testimonies of Mireille Battut, the president of "La Mano a la oreja" and Anne-Cécile Nackaerts who participated in Déborah Allio's book dedicated to Briac, her autistic son³.

During the Study Day, four clinical cases were discussed in depth by two commentators and by Eric Laurent who was our guiding thread for the cases of the day. He highlighted, in particular, the very elaborated language skills that an autistic subject showed, handling secrecy and insult in a particular way, even though he had great difficulties of socialisation and precarious academic achievements. The discussions demonstrated how autistic subjects are decided workers to improve their relationship with the world and to better regulate the jouissance that invades them.

At the beginning of the afternoon, Éric Laurent presented his research work focused on «the *no-réson* and topology in autism» by Jean-Claude Maleval. The

² <https://www.who.int/es/publications/b/67925>

³ ALLIO D. : *Attention a peur ! – Conversations avec la famille d'un jeune autiste*, Imago, 2023

contribution of the latter, in the case of Albert Einstein, allowed through a solid argument that well illustrated the clinical rigour of the analytical approach, to refute his supposed autism regularly repeated on social media. Jean-Claude Maleval's text was read, just as he had proposed, since a case of force majeure deprived us of his presence at the last moment. Yves-Claude Stavy agreed to replace him for a rewarding discussion of the two texts.

Introduced by the president of the ECF, Anaëlle Lebovits-Quenehen, who gave a strong political perspective to our orientation, the meeting concluded with a few words from Jérôme Lecaux, director of CERA and of this Study Day.

A new date has already been set for the 4th edition in 2026. The CERA mornings continue at the ECF Headquarters (transmitted by Zoom upon registration).

Jérôme Lecaux

The CERA, throughout 2024, has developed its teaching program.

The Mornings of the cycle REPETITION IN AUTISM⁴:

- Saturday, January 20, 2024: The reception of autistic in institutions
- Saturday, March 23, 2024: 3rd CERA Study Day Autism for All?
- Saturday, April 27, 2024: Repetition and topology of autism
- Saturday, May 25, 2024: From repetition to iteration and back
- Saturday, June 8, 2024: Conference by Éric Laurent: The autistic dimension of the trans solution

The mornings of the cycle FUNCTION OF OBJECTS IN AUTISTIC PEOPLE⁵:

- Saturday, September 21, 2024: The autistic and his objects
- Saturday, October 19, 2024: Topology of Autism
- Saturday, November 23, 2024: Uses of numerical objects and other affinities

In the *Escuela Lacaniana de psicoanálisis (ELP)*

Activity of the ELP Autism Observatory

In January this year, the ELP Council agreed that the working group that is coordinated with the Autism Observatory of the Eurofederation will take over functions over the Autism Observatory at the ELP. It is a sign of the School's interest in autism as an epochal question concerning the future of psychoanalysis.

⁴ <https://cause-autisme.fr/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/programme-cera-23-24.pdf>

⁵ <https://cause-autisme.fr/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/maquette-programme-cera-24-25.pdf>

The Observatory is made up of members of ELP and partners of its headquarters and has held this year three meetings mainly devoted to:

1.- **Update information** on the work of those colleagues who work with autistics and their families from the Lacanian orientation.

We have been able to specify that in the Autonomous Communities of the State where our School has its headquarters, diagnoses are carried out in health services (usually paediatrics, neuropsychiatry and mental health). In some cases, early years services for the so-called early childhood developmental disorders are also involved, as are other associations (Autism, Asperger's or others), but the weight acquired by neuropsychiatry is widespread, particularly the neuro drift of much of these early years services. Also, the emergence of a new neuro figure, neuropsychology. The involvement of mental health in diagnostic assessment of autism is very discreet.

With regard to interventions, clinical practice is increasingly being questioned and the trend in public services is to shift the weight of interventions to education and disability services. Therefore the value of the spaces that derive from the practice with autistic people sustained for decades in our consultations, or the ones that exist thanks to institutional initiatives launched by members of our School, or by those who practise in public or private institutions, becomes more evident.

These are spaces where we can welcome those who do not want to go through these diagnostic circuits, or do not fit in, and are dropped, in certain institutions. It is a moment to think about the value of what is happening in Spain for the treatment of autism in the Lacanian Orientation, and what may arise. It is important to be attentive wherever there is someone who has an initiative.

There is something disheartening in this movement of the state in relation to autism, which shows the relentless, supported by all political parties, in wanting to eradicate everything that is not cognitive-behavioural, or that is not under the domain of evaluation, as well as the discredit that is promoted or consented to towards other conceptions and treatments of autistic people and their families. We have also noted the difficulty of finding a point of support that will serve us to do something about this drift.

2.- Read the relevant **documentation produced in certain national and international institutions.**

In addition to the aforementioned WHO publication, another document that has interested us is the one published in January by the *Spanish Centre on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*, entitled *Practices without scientific evidence: how to recognize them and some practical recommendations*⁶. A document that insists on a definition of autism that excludes any consideration of the subjectivity and singularity of each human being as a speaking-being, insisting on "the strong

⁶ <https://centroautismo.es/informe-tecnico-evidencia-cientifica/>

influence of genetic factors in its origin" despite recognizing that "it is not possible to determine an isolated cause for autism".

One striking aspect of the text is its conviction in establishing procedures that are scientific and those that are not, or what are bad practices for lacking what they call "scientific evidence", going as far as to suggest that the only interventions recommended for treating autism are of a psycho-educational nature, and that bad practices are based on anecdotes or anecdotal testimonies, beliefs or individual experiences. They argue that practices based on the latter can be dangerous for autistic people. The testimony as a way of presenting a concrete practice is reduced to the status of anecdote.

Another aspect is the emphasis on what they call natural environments, the importance of performing interventions at home or in school. But these proposals for interventions are not put forward as a response to singular conditions, specific to a particular subject, but as a standard. The question we are asking is whether we are not dealing with a re-edition of the strategy of institutional liquidation which we have already seen, years ago, in other fields, not as a transformation of the modalities of intervention, but as a disguised way of reducing costs. Without ruling out that it is the result of an absolute lack of institutional projects for people with autism.

Following up the documentation used for the preparation of the above mentioned report, which is presented as a novelty, we found that the main content of the good practices considered repeats and rewrites the arguments of the *Position Paper. Interventions without contrasted evidence*, prepared by the *Confederación Autismo España* in 2015, a document that, in turn, takes them from a 2006 report, the *Guide of good practice for the treatment of autism spectrum disorders*, Developed by the *Instituto de Salud Carlos III*. Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs, Spain.

The forcefulness with which the authors of this Guide pronounce themselves in dismissing and discrediting psychoanalysis is equivalent to the phenomenal ignorance they show regarding the complexity of the conceptual building that, since Freud, has been built by a multitude of authors to establish some foundations of the treatment of autism from psychoanalysis, always based on their practice, which includes thousands of cases, and a permanent study and research in very diverse fields of the so-called human sciences and some serious sciences. To take the measure of such a sham, you can read what that "Guide" says *about psychodynamic therapy (of psychoanalytic orientation) for the treatment of ASD*⁷.

⁷ REV NEUROL 2006; 43 (7): 425-438, pág. 430 y a las **Conclusiones de la revisión de los tratamientos propuestos**, págs. 434-436. Accesible en: https://www.catedraautismeudg.com/data/articles_cientifics/9/6b60e387cd344926a2a345687a6a7afa-guiatractamenttea.pdf

Another document, the First PLAN OF SPANISH STRATEGY ACTION IN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER 2023-2027, presented on 3 April by the Ministry of Social Rights, Consumption and Agenda 2030, reflects the same approaches, in fact, this First Plan has been written by the *Spanish Centre for ASD* itself, as an adviser to the Royal Board on Disability, a body dependent on the aforementioned ministry.

The Plan is part of the *Spanish ASD Strategy*, which is the official framework for policies and actions for people with autism throughout the state.

Such a document, due to its novelty; the matter at hand and its status, has the ability and responsibility to facilitate and promote concurrence and articulation of the different areas in which work is being done with people with autism.

This type document and an institutional device like the *Spanish Center on ASD* have the opportunity to generate a movement and an atmosphere of collaboration and participation among all agents, individuals and collectives, public and private, working to support, to accompany and to respond to the difficulties that autistic people and their families face. It has the capacity to promote the exchange of different experiences, to favour working networks of different tendencies, to put into action through a certain articulation what already exists, what is already being done. And yet the document and the institutional apparatus that produces it does not go in this direction, since they introduce from their first movements an effect of division, exclusion and sectarianism.

We point out the shamelessness that surrounds itself with constant references and calls to evidence and science, in order to hide its ignorance and neglect of decisive factors for the possibilities of working with people with autism: for example, everything relating to the establishment and management of the special relationship established within the framework of the processes of care and accompaniment to suffering and difficulty, or everything relating to the conception and formalisation of the position of the practitioners, when it comes to the way in which we think and act in relation with each subject, in each intervention.

This position implies a refusal to accept the impossibility of applying quantification to some fundamental aspects of the human condition that are at stake in autism. And this pretension of applying the quantitative at the expense of the singularity of the subject is not science, it is barbarism and will to dominate. It is, in effect, the position of wanting to impose a single conception, with the threat of classifying as risk practices for autistic people and their families those conceptions and practices that are not governed by its same criteria. The above-mentioned document *Practices without scientific evidence: how to recognize them and some practical recommendations*, is a sample of this overbearing, threatening and falsely scientific position that we point out.

We wonder whether it is reasonable and sensible that a Ministry of the government of the Spanish State, and public bodies belonging to it, adopt or

maintain such a partial position, sectarian, prepotent, authoritarian and exclusionary of options, such as the one represented by psychoanalysis, and others who have been working in this field for decades, which are constantly updating and renewing their practice and the mechanisms for controlling it.

Such a position is not scientific, it is not rigorous and it can cause confusion, disorientation and harm to many people with autism, their families and the professionals who work with them.

3.- The attempt to **update a relationship of institutions that take the Lacanian Orientation in their practice with autism**, or in which there are members of the ELP or partners of its headquarters working in that field, based on the survey made by the FCPOL in 2017-2018 has given very partial results, so we have to look for another method to update this information.

On the basis of these considerations, we have proposed several lines of action which we have defined as follows:

- The opportunity to initiate a dialogue from the ELP, with one of the official institutions that the *Spanish Center on ASD* depends on, be it the Royal Board on Disability or directly the Ministry of Social Rights. We are considering how to convey to the Ministry that there are other voices, other conceptions, other ways of conceiving and working with people with autism.

In view of this dialogue it will be essential to achieve greater visibility of what is done and how it is done from the Lacanian orientation in working with autism. This dialogue should make our epistemic, clinical and political position as well as our concepts and the practice that we have been carrying out for years with autistic people and their families more visible

This means being able to present documentation that clearly and rigorously, but also firmly, shows our action in the field of autism: texts, magazines, audiovisual material, clear and accessible references to the extensive documentation produced in our area. It also involves an editorial policy on autism by the ELP, and the support from the Observatory to the translation and promotion in various editorials of the Spanish edition of certain fundamental texts.

- We also evaluated the desirability of a School work, in the ELP itself, to produce an elaboration, a pronouncement about what is the Lacanian orientation in relation to the treatment of Autism. In this respect, it would be very interesting if the ELP could produce an updated document based on all that is done, presenting this discourse in its media, mainly on the web. It may be a tab *Autism*, on the ELP website, or perhaps a specific website that can be done and that is a School work.

This would make the work produced by colleagues of the ELP for the three Autism Forums more accessible. Also and very importantly, to circulate bibliographical references produced in our field, since the Anglo-Saxon literature on autism is the only one that circulates in official and university texts.

- Another line of action that we contemplate is the possibility of finding an interlocution in relation to the entities of people with autism who speak in the first person. In Spain, this will become increasingly important.

It is about exploring what kind of dialogue we can establish with autistic adults, or if there are connections between the first-person activist movement and psychoanalysis, something new for us. For that, it will also be necessary to do a School work about how we elaborate a discourse in relation to autism that is unmarked from the disorder. A work on what is our de-pathologization of autism, which does not mean that there is no discomfort, there is suffering of the autistic subject. We begin from that, from the real of the autistic, which is a real in which there is the suffering of being ejected from any kind of discourse.

Psychoanalysis is not exactly alien to what is now called the autistic condition, or being autistic, that is, the fact of finding in the subject's own singularity, its own solution, its own functioning. It is a matter that concerns our ethics, because we cannot oppose this position, which is precisely a way of making the singularity present. The point is that there is a substantial difference between our de-pathologization and the others. And to be able to explain it, to transmit it, and to be reflected in the School's page is fundamental.

- Finally, it seems to us very important to encourage initiatives for exchanges of experience between networks, including exchanges between Europe and the Americas. Eric Laurent recently highlighted the value of these exchanges⁸.

The ELP's Autism Observatory

In the New Lacanian School (NLS)

Institutions hosting autistic subjects within different frameworks by members of the NLS and members of the NLS groups

ASREEP-NLS (Suisse)

Centre Hospitalier Universitaire Vaudois (CHUV). Lausanne, Suisse

Day centre CHUV.

⁸ Nuevas versiones de la batalla del autismo. INES. Instituto Nueva Escuela. <https://youtu.be/87zwfctvHDg>

The reception is not exclusive to autistic subjects but their number is increasing. Several structures are currently in place:

- A small specialised school and a therapeutic centre (CTJE) with 18 places of which 80-90% of children suffer from autism as well as a larger school.

- A Therapeutic Centre (CPT) with 54 places, of which one third of children aged 6 to 12 years old have autism. It is a specialised school associated with a care centre.

- A crisis day hospital and short stay assessment (CITE), a partial reception that also receives autistic subjects of preschool and school age for, among other things, diagnostic evaluation and therapeutic follow-up.

4 ASREEP-NLS members, psychiatrists and psychologists are part of the team in these structures. The CHUV also serves as a training space for younger colleagues (university department).

Responsibles: Dr Olga Sidiropoulou, child psychiatrist, associate physician, member of the Asreep - NLS, olga.oidiropoulou@chuv.ch

Frédéric Pacaud, psychologist at the CPT, member of the NLS, frederic.pacaud@chuv.ch

Centre Chablaisien de Psychiatrie et Pédopsychiatrie (CCPP). Aigle, Suisse

CCPP was created by members of the NLS and members of the ASREEP-NLS. It welcomes, among others, children, adolescents and adults affected by autism.

8 Colleagues are involved in the cabinet and are members of ASREEP and/or NLS.

Responsibles: Dr René Raggenbass, psychiatrist, member of the NLS, rene.raggenbass@hin.ch

Dominique Rudaz, psychologist, member of ASREEP – NLS, dominique.rudaz@hin.ch

Marie Trémelot, psychologist, member of ASREEP - NLS marie.tremelot@fsp-hin.ch

l'Institut Insight Discourse. Lausanne et Genève, Suisse

The institute is specialised in psychiatry, psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, offering integrative support. The team is multidisciplinary. It includes psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, psychoanalysts, nurses, social workers and educators. In this context, the institute offers services for children, adolescents and adults with autism spectrum disorders, among other psychopathologies.

Responsible: Silvia Geller, psychologist, member of NLS sg@silviageller.ch

GIEP-NLS (Israël)

PART Tel Aviv, Israël

The unit's name is PART, which stands for Psychosis, Autism, Research and Treatment. PART is the result of a collaboration between the Dor-a Clinical Section in Tel Aviv and the hospital. It is both a clinical unit for patients and a place where clinicians analytically oriented interested in institutional work can complete a two-year formation.

A collaboration with Le Courtil has been established.

PART clinicians are all in analysis. They are not members of GIEP but participate in the activities of GIEP and the Clinical Section: Dorit Loew Goldberg, Elizabeth Tamir, Lihi Goldman, Orly Parente, Ronit Asaban.

Training in the Unit includes clinical case presentations, which take place under the auspices of the Dor-a Clinical Seminar.

https://dor-a-lacan.com/?page_id=252

The PART unit was established as part of an outpatient clinic called "Keshet" (Hebrew: rainbow) at Sheba Hospital. The population at the "Keshet" is comprised of adults who have been diagnosed with autism.

Responsible: Liat Schalit (PhD), psychologist, member of NLS, Director of the PART Unit, liatschalit@gmail.com

ICLO-NLS (Ireland)

Space2be. Naas, Ireland

Description: space2be is a non-profit organisation and a vital community service where children and young people with significant difficulties with the social bond (usually called autistic) have a place to go to reduce their isolation. The participants may or may not have received a diagnosis. This is important to note since many children with complex needs, who have not met the criteria for a specific condition, can fall between the gaps of services. In Space2be we avoid that by providing services beyond diagnosis. Practitioners are interested in the particular way these children deal with life, with others, with their bodies, with language and with the world. The practitioners are interested in their interests, which are the little openings from where the small engagement may start. The work is recreational and clinically oriented by plural practice. Participants are supported with their particular needs, on a one-to-one basis in a group setting. The work is collaborative and it is carried out in partnership with children, young people and their families. The approach is docile, child-led and only possible with the participant's consent. There are 13 children in the service at present.

Location: Naas, Co.Kildare, Ireland

Duration: Established in 2018 as a small group in a wider organisation. Re-established as an independent entity (Company Limited by Guarantee) in 2023

Consulting Council: In 2023 Daniel Roy proposed to form a consulting council. The members are: Eve Miller-Rose (representing the Freudian Field); Neus Carbonell (representing the NLS); Iván Ruiz (representing TEAdir); Sheila Power (representing ICLO-NLS) and Bruno de Halleux (representing La Antenne 110). Former Member Yves Vanderveken (representing Le Courtil). The council meets on average every 6 weeks.

Space2be Team: There are 4 ICLO-NLS Members: Cecilia Saviotti; Nefeli Papadaki; Mercedes Sanchez Granel; Denise Waters. There are other practitioners and volunteers, some of whom are in formation and are friends of ICLO-NLS: Susan Whelan; Estafania Garcia; Conor Ward; Manuela del Campo; Inge-Jelena Kroker. There is a community volunteer: Sheila Daly; a Jr Volunteer: Saoirse Saviotti and a Trinity College Student: Samantha Lopez. The team has a total of 12 members, 9 of which are in analysis with a member of the WAP.

Activities: Since June 2023 there have been 4 Mid-term camps; parental meetings; individual sessions and weekly workshops.

Funds: Since becoming an independent entity space2be has received one-off funds from the public sector: Health Service Executive; County Council and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The team is working hard to secure long-term funds for the work to continue. There has been a GoFundMe campaign and small fundraising events. Parents pay a nominal fee for the group work and affordable fees for individual sessions.

Autism Workshops of the Lacanian Orientation: This space was created to allow the space2be team to articulate the experiences in the clinic; work on the theoretical references (translate, read, discuss) and present their work to an *extimo* (a colleague from the school with experience in autism). Monthly meetings.

NEWS:

Documentary: The space2be short film was screened in Barcelona at the TEAdir Study Day in September 2023 - the film is in english and has Spanish subtitles - (credits to Raphael Montague). The documentary was very well received.

Venue: space2be has a new "home", a lovely cottage with a big garden in the centre of Naas at a very low rent.

Press: *Plural Practice* was mentioned in a national press release as the Minister announces funding for Local Area Child Poverty Action Plans

Testimonies:

"We felt that they were the best people to advise us, they were not speaking from books, or statistics, they were speaking about our daughter" (T.'s mother)

"We don't have family here, but Space2be is like home for us" (S' mother)

"It has been a life saver not only for our son but for all of us as a family" (M's

parents)

"Only place I'm allowed to speak rubbish and do nothing if I want to" (J - participant)

"I want Space2be-for-me; I'm less confused here; people are never mean. Best adults" (M-participant)

"It's a space I can just be, I can be myself, anyone is welcome, even aliens would be welcome here" (R -Participant who named the project his "*space to be*").

Responsible: Cecilia Saviotti, psychologist, member of ICLO-NLS, founder and therapeutic director of space2be ceciliasaviotti@gmail.com

Albania Initiative

Qendra Komunitare Multidisciplinare (Multidisciplinary Community Centre)
Tirana, Albania

Day centre for psychotic and autistic children.

Colleague Practitioner: Sonilda Barjamaj, psychologist (former intern at Courtil), member of the Albania Initiative, sonildabarjamaj11@gmail.com

Bulgarian Lacanian Psychoanalysis Society (SBPL)

Association "Child and Space" Sofia, Bulgaria

The Association "Enfant et Espace" implements the Lacanian orientation through the work of the therapeutic team, managing 9 social services in Sofia and Ruse (4 residential institutions and 5 day care centres). These social services are intended for children and adolescents with autism, disabilities, severe mental disorders, various forms of psychological suffering and difficulties with the social bond.

The therapeutic team, which includes several BSLP members - Bilyana Mechkunova, Milena Popova, Blaga Banova, Raya Vencislavova, Ana Ancheva, Lyubov Lukareva, Anette Marinova and Vesselina Vassileva - is engaged in a clinical case discussion, from the 9 social services. In two of the services - the Centre for Social Integration and Rehabilitation (day centre) "Hedgehogs " in Sofia, headed by Blaga Banova, psychologist, and the Centre for Social Integration and Rehabilitation (day centre) In Ruse, the clinical work is entirely guided by Lacan's teaching.

Responsible: Vessela Banova, Clinical Psychologist, NLS member. vbanova@gmail.com

Bilyana Mechkunova, child psychiatrist, NLS member, bmechkunova@gmail.com

Mental Health Centre for children and adolescents. Ruse, Bulgaria

The Mental Health Centre (CSM) for children and adolescents is an ambulatory child psychiatric service located in Ruse. Lacanian orientation is implemented by the clinical work of Bilyana Mechkunova and Milena Popova in consultations and

short-term interventions with children, adolescents and parents. The CSM maintains close working relationships with the Centre d'intégration et de réhabilitation sociale sharing the same premises.

Responsible: Bilyana Mechkunova, child psychiatrist, member of the NLS. bmechkunova@gmail.com

Social institutions in which the Lacanian orientation is introduced by the supervision of members of the NLS and BSLP:

Day centre for autistic children in Gabrovo - supervised by Dessislava Ivanova, psychologist, member of the NLS, tzveta33@abv.bg

Residential institutions for children and youth with disabilities in Kazanlak and Kyustendil - supervised by Raya Vencislavova, psychologist, member of the OPPS, rayadmtrv@gmail.com

Day centre for autistic children in Varna - supervision by Vessela Banova, member of the NLS, vbanova@gmail.com

Hellenic Society of the NLS (SH-NLS)

Department of Psychiatry for Adolescents and Young People at the General Hospital of Athens " G. GENNIMATAS " Athens, Greece

Day hospital and outpatient consultations: Reception of adolescents and young people up to the age of 23, psychotic and autistic.

Responsible: Dr Epaminondas Theodoridis, psychiatrist, Head of Service, member of the NLS, etheodor@otenet.gr

Borromean Knot Society

Special school for psychotic and autistic children. Crete, Greece

Ioanna Verigaki, psychologist, member of the NLS verigaki@yahoo.gr

Warsaw Circle

Child psychiatric hospital. Warsaw, Poland

Population: psychotic and autistic children and adolescents

Responsible: Janusz Kotara, psychiatrist, member of the NLS

kotarajanusz@autograf.pl

Psychological and Psychotherapeutic Center for children and adults. Poznań, Poland

Population: children, adolescents and adults with diagnosis of autism spectrum, gender dysphoria, psychoses, neuroses, etc.

Responsible:: Olga Sakson- Obada, psychologist, member of the Warsaw Circle, osakson@wp.pl

In the Scuola Lacaniana di Psicoanalisi (SLP)

Antenna 00100 - Nazzano, province of Rome

Since 2018, a residential institution for adolescents and young adults with autism or severe psychosis has been created, currently hosting 18 users in residential mode and other children who come in daytime mode. Together with Gregorio di Ciaccia, for the management of this institution, we opened a Foundation that we called "Quarto Nodo". Before the Foundation I had already opened the social cooperative "Il desiderio di Barbiana", still operating.

We have a team of about 40 workers (educators, psychologists, students of the Freudian Institute or participants in SLP, therapists, musicians, social workers), which we try to orient every week starting from the clinic of Lacan and from the *practice à plusieurs* invented by Antonio Di Ciaccia. How to make the institution conform to the needs of the structure of the unconscious? How to make the clinic of Lacan operational in institutional work? Every day we try to answer these questions and we have the opportunity to learn something about the functioning of the unconscious thanks to the children we work with. Antonio Di Ciaccia is our point of reference for the clinic in the institution.

In the next semester we will open as Foundation "Quarto nodo" two new residential structures: one dedicated to children and adolescents (developmental age), which will host another 12 users, and another dedicated to young adults (18+ years old).

From the clinic to the social and back

In addition to the Antenna 00100 we have opened social and labour inclusion projects for young adults who are hosted in our residential structure and for other young autistic people living in the area. It is a restaurant ("Farfood"), a farm and a craft brewery ("Labbarato"). With the management of these work activities we try to find ways to support young people autistic or psychotic to insert themselves in the social and working relationship, to find "workshops" that are suitable for the needs of "young adult", that can make them not only "assisted" but capable of inventing their own particular solution to take part in the social bond.

Policy and evaluation

As is known, in Italy as in other European countries there are "Guidelines" (specifically the Guideline 21 of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, updated to the latest version in 2024) that guide professionals in regards to treatments for autism

that are considered "valid" or "effective", according to the model of *evidence-based medicine*. Psychoanalytic approaches are not mentioned in Italy among the approaches considered valid, to be precise they are not mentioned (as if they did not exist). We know that our clinical orientation leads us to work on a "case by case" basis, on the detail, the singular solution, aspects which are not very well married with scientific and quantitative assessments, based on averages and standard deviations. However, we have the problem of making our own modality of hosting and treatment exist in the Guides, as well as other modalities which are mentioned, since the institutional work we carry out produces "evident" effects in the lives of the subjects entrusted to us and their families. For some years now, we have been asking how to carry out studies and publications that give a better account of the work done in an institution and thus allow the *pratique à plusieurs* to be recognised by the national and international guidelines.

In Antenna 00100 we are working on the construction of *case studies* and, in perspective, a "pilot study", a longitudinal research with a fairly large and representative sample. These studies are designed to show the effects on the "Quality of Life" (*Quality of Life*) of a treatment of autism from the Lacanian psychoanalysis, specifically the *pratique à plusieurs*. We used evaluation scales (research tools) not "symptomatic", that is they do not investigate the "problematic" aspects of autism (scales that would have been cognitive), but we used scales that refer to the increase in quality of life, or the overall well-being of the individual. It seemed to us that this could give a better account of our work, which does not target the symptom, but to the caring at 360° of a given subject. The improvement of the symptom occurs as an "addition".

We are wondering how to replicate this or other studies at a European level, in order to have enough cases and publications to have an impact on the policies that currently cut us off.

Clinical section of Rome

In collaboration with the Freudian Institute (clinical section of Rome) we started a course on "Clinic in the institution and plural practice", carried out once a month. A case of autism in institution is presented, commented among participants and with the participation of Antonio Di Ciaccia. Currently, this course is attended by both students of the institution or members of the school and both educators and practitioners interested in institutional work.

These are our internet references:

www.desideriodibarbiana.com

www.labbarrato.com

We will soon have the site of the Foundation "Quarto Nodo".

Responsible: *Manuele Cicuti e Gregorio Di Ciaccia.*

Jesús Sebastián, with the collaboration of Jérôme Lecaux (ECF), Patricia Bosquin-Caroz and Cecilia Saviotti (NLS), Amelia Barbui, Manuele Cicuti and Gregorio Di Ciaccia (SLP).

jsebastianb@telefonica.net