THE PORTUGUESE SCHOOL OF GROUP ANALYSIS
TOWARDS A UNIFIED AND INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THEORY RESEARCH AND CLINICAL WORK
EDITED BY ISAURA MANSO NETO AND MARGARIDA FRANÇA
“For all those, with an interest in our field, this book provides a welcome and much-needed account, in English, of the ‘Portuguese model’. In articulating this distinctive approach, against the broader historical background of Group Analysis, the authors remind us of its vital international character.”

David Glyn, president of the group, Group Analytic Society International

“This book is not only the long-missed history of the Portuguese school of group analysis. It’s also a comprehensive and thorough description of its present conceptional understanding of theory, methods and clinical use of group analysis and the requirements in training, which are probably the most demanding in Europe. An engaging and inspiring reading.”

Kristian Valbak, PhD, group analyst and former president of EGATIN

“This is a most interesting book about the different identity of Portuguese school of ‘group analysis’. Cortesao, its founder, conceptualized a fascinating framework of three times a week group analysis, which is considered ‘a psychoanalytic treatment of the individual in and through the group’. This book will be an important step into a fertile international dialogue between different approaches of group analytic therapy.”

Robi Friedman, group analyst, former president of the International Group Analytic Society, former chair of the Israeli Institute for Group Analysis

“The book seeks to integrate theory, clinical wisdom and research and generously offers clinical examples and references to illustrate and support the text. I am happy to recommend this comprehensive, ambitious and well-written book, which addresses and reflects upon questions that are highly important and urgently need answers.”

Steinar Lorentzen, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Oslo, psychoanalyst, group analyst
At the time group analysis was emerging in the United Kingdom through the ideas of S. H. Foulkes, one of his followers, Eduardo Luís Cortesão, returned to Portugal and founded the Portuguese Society of Groupanalysis, with the first group-analytic Symposium taking place in Estoril, Portugal, in 1970. In this vital new book, an impressive collection of contributors demonstrate how group analysis in Portugal has always embraced the relational paradigm that has become central to contemporary psychoanalysis.

The Portuguese school of groupanalysis, through several of its senior members, has contributed to many of the organizations responsible for the development of group analysis, such as EGATIN, IAGP and GASi. Nevertheless some of the concepts and variations of the Portuguese school of groupanalysis tend to be unknown to the English speaker. Their focus is on the “pattern,” allowing transformation of each patient’s personal matrix, working through primitive relational failures and paving the way to new beginnings, always in a transgenerational group context.

This book will be of tremendous importance to psychotherapists working in group analysis around the world.

**Isaura Manso Neto**, MD, is a training and supervisor member, and current president of the Portuguese Society of Groupanalysis and Analytic Group Psychotherapy, a GASi full-member, a member of the Portuguese Society of Psychoanalysis and of the Portuguese Association of Relational Psychoanalysis. She is currently working in private practice as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist, supervisor and group analyst, conducting four group-analytic groups.

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Drawing on the seminal ideas of British, European, and American group analysts, psychoanalysts, social psychologists and social scientists, the books in this series focus on the study of small and large groups, organisations and other social systems, and on the study of the transpersonal and transgenerational sociality of human nature. NILGA books will be required reading for the members of professional organisations in the field of group analysis, psychoanalysis, and related social sciences. They will be indispensable for the “formation” of students of psychotherapy, whether they are mainly interested in clinical work with patients or in consultancy to teams and organisational clients within the private and public sectors.

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*Edited by Jason Maratos*
The Portuguese School of Group Analysis

Towards a Unified and Integrated Approach to Theory Research and Clinical Work

Edited by Isaura Manso Neto and Margarida França
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Whether as a broad church or spectrum or range of interrelated orientations which have developed around several charismatic colleagues who were both innovative thinkers and passionate teachers and clinicians, what is known in Portugal as “groupanalysis” has hardly received the international recognition and appreciation that it has earned and deserves. There are many reasons for this, perhaps the most important being that we in the English-speaking world tend not to read the Portuguese literature, at least not outside the wine trade in which relations between Portugal and England have been established for several centuries. However, colleagues from Portugal have taken important, leading roles in various organizations in our field, such as the International Association for Group Psychotherapy and Group Process (IAGP), the Group Analytic Society International (GASi), and the European Group Analytic Training Institute Network (EGATIN). They have also presented their work at conferences and workshops, and this has been highly valued.

Following the 16th International Symposium of GASi in Lisbon in 2014, I asked Dr Isaura Manso Neto and Dr César Vieira Dinis, two of the leading figures in our profession in Portugal, to write and edit a book about groupanalysis, focusing on current work, but with an appreciation of its history and development. Perhaps not fully aware of the effort that this would involve, especially in the context of their active and fulfilling professional and family lives, they readily agreed to take on this important task. While gazing across the ocean towards Brazil and after a second round of coffee and Aguardente Bagaceira, we more or less outlined some of the main features of this project.

My expectations and their determination have been richly rewarded. Three of my own favourite contributions from Portuguese colleagues have been emphasized. The often-overlooked theory and concept of the pattern, as formulated by Eduardo Cortêsão, has been re-introduced. The “pattern” is not unrelated to Bion’s concept of group mentality, Ezriel’s concept of common group tension, Stock-Whitaker’s concept of focal group conflict, and to Foulkes’ overarching theory of what has recently been called
the tripartite matrix. The notion of pattern is also reminiscent of Ruth Benedict’s ideas concerning “cultural patterns”, which are at the foundation of the culture and personality school of thought in anthropology, to which Bronislaw Malinowski made core contributions, and from which Foulkes drew important insights. It is not generally appreciated how difficult it is to think about the so-called “collective transference” without using at least a modified conceptualization of the pattern.

The second contribution which has been very important to me is the theory and concept of the internal relational matrix developed by Maria Rita Sá Mendes Leal (David & Neto, 2019). I believe that Leal’s ideas were an important influence on the early conceptualization of what Foulkes called the “personal matrix”. Both concepts emphasize the unconscious intrapsychic relational and interpersonal lives of the participants in a clinical group. Without such concepts serious clinical group analysis is merely an economically efficient way of attempting to provide personal therapy for people in groups. Dr Leal also specialized in the development of group work with children and adolescents, and in the study of sub-symbolic processes. In 1971, Dr Leal was awarded the first Foulkes Prize for her work.

I would also like to mention Antonio Guilherme Ferreira’s theorization of transference processes in group analysis. He presented his work in 2008 at the GASi Symposium in Dublin, where we shared a panel on the topic of transference. We agreed that the analysis of transference and countertransference processes was at the heart of clinical work (Hopper, 2006, 2007a, b). We should never have shifted away from our commitment to this, even though our thinking about transference and the interpretation of it had gone through important changes. The notion of a mutative interpretation was still valid, provided that it was offered with respect for interpersonal affect. We remained committed to an appreciation of psychoanalysis as one of the three roots of group analysis, along with those of sociology and the study of group dynamics.

I was very sad to have learned that Guilherme died just as this book was going into production. He was looking forward to its publication. Guilherme was a member of the Board of the IAGP, and was of great help to me when I was the President of this organization. On several occasions we listened to authentic fado in the back streets of Old Lisbon. We acknowledged that there was something of significance in the Foulkesian notion of the “music of the group”. He said that fado might be the music of the foundation matrix of Portugal. If so, Guilherme had an ear for it. He also had a special sensitivity to the pains of trauma. I will miss him.

I want to express my appreciation to the co-editors of this book. Isaura and Margarida, the latter having taken on the role from César, have both contributed chapters and edited material from their colleagues, having also encouraged them to present their work. It is all too easy to overlook the efforts and even sacrifices of our female colleagues, who have many commitments
to their families, partners, children, and grandchildren, as well as to their patients, students and colleagues. I asked Isaura and Margarida to tell me a little about themselves, beyond their professional accomplishments: what did they regard as important to their own identities, and how might they wish to be recognized? Accordingly, I quote from what they have written to me, lightly edited:

Isaura Manso Neto:
I have lived according to my personality traits, which are mainly unconformity and resilience towards reaching my main objectives, looking for pleasure in my family, profession, and hobbies—dance, swimming in the sea. I am married and I have two sons: the eldest, is an economist, and the youngest is a psychiatrist with psychoanalytic training. I have two teenage grand-daughters, beautiful, and intelligent. Being with them all is a real pleasure. I have always been strongly influenced by the psychoanalytic and group-analytic way of understanding and dealing with human beings, and, thus, with human suffering. In 2008, together with the Day Hospital team, I was awarded the Jane Abercrombie Prize. I have tried to make bridges between group-analytic cultures using different languages—English, Portuguese/Brazilian, Spanish and French, taking advantage of a good enough knowledge of each of them. Another passion is to teach residents and supervisees, from whom I have learned so much. And last but not the least: I love to be a psychotherapist, and a groupanalyst; moreover, I will take the risk to say that I love my patients.

Margarida França:
I am a mother of two boys, ten and eight years old. My husband is also a psychotherapist. I try to divide my day time with them, working mostly while the children are at school, and cooking (which I love) dinner every day. I think, family life is my recipe for keeping emotional balance. My two princes are also two very demanding savages, and I guess I take pleasure in being pushed around by them! Although I have always felt quite cosmopolitan, I really like the sun and the beach, and lately I have started to imagine myself, in a few years, living most of the time in a peaceful village in Algarve, by the sea.

While taking my psychology degree, I swiftly understood that before taking care of others, I needed to be taking care of my own mental health. So, I started psychotherapy with Isaura when I was 20 years old. After a while she suggested that I could be in a group. I feel very welcome in the Portuguese Society of Groupanalysis. I have been a member of the Local Organizing Committee of a Luso-Brazilian Congress, and I was a member of the LOC of the Lisbon GASi Symposium in 2014. Isaura and I continued to work together, and her invitation to be
her co-editor for this book made me feel very proud of myself and very grateful to her for her trust in me.

As is the case for most books in the New International Library of Group Analysis (NILGA), this book is essential reading for colleagues who practice group analysis, whether called “group-analysis”, “groupanalysis”, or even “psychoanalytical group psychotherapy”. This important contribution will be of value to our students. I look forward to wetting its head at our next International Symposium.

References


Earl Hopper
Series Editor
First and foremost, we would like to acknowledge Earl Hopper, in his capacity as the editor of the New International Library of Group Analysis (NILGA) series, for having invited us to take up this stimulating challenge. As editors of this work, we assumed an enormous responsibility towards the Portuguese school of group analysis, a legacy of Eduardo Luís Cortesão and his immediate followers, to whom we pay tribute.

In addition to Cortesão’s legacy, the Portuguese school of group analysis has been influenced very much by other perspectives on group analysis and psychoanalysis of colleagues from Europe, North America and Latin America, as well as by scientific contributions from other disciplines. We are grateful to them for the chance to learn and embrace a variety of perspectives, paving the way to making group analysis a useful, creative and democratic therapeutic setting with several applications.

We thank our editors at Routledge—Russell George and Alec Selwyn—for their encouragement and patience. A word for Rod Tweedy, initially at Karnac, when the adventure began.

This book would not have happened without the valuable cooperation of the contributing authors, all of whom are hard-working members of SPGPAG (the Portuguese Society of Groupanalysis and Analytic Group Psychotherapy) who entrusted us with their ideas about group analysis after having developed the themes that we suggested to them at the outset.

We regret that one of them is not amongst us anymore. Guilherme Ferreira died while this book was entering production. We will deeply miss his presence within the Groupanalytic Society.

We are grateful to our mentors, teachers, colleagues, and post-graduate psychotherapy and groupanalysis students from whom we have learnt so much, either in their presence or through their writings. It has been great to be stimulated by all of them, even those with whom we do not agree.

We acknowledge our original families with whom we lived both pleasurable and difficult experiences that gave rise to our need to better understand human and group dynamics.
We especially thank our current families for their tolerance, emotional support and confidence in our abilities.
Lastly, we would like to express our gratitude to our patients and group members for their trust and the possibility to learn so much.
We offer a warm thank-you to those who agreed to our inclusion of real clinical vignettes in which they are portrayed, and therefore contributed to making this book a more vivid and credible experience.

Isaura Manso Neto and Margarida França
Editors
# Abbreviations

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<td>AGPA</td>
<td>American Group Psychotherapy Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSPA</td>
<td>British Society of Psychoanalysis</td>
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<td>EFPP</td>
<td>European Federation for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy</td>
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<td>EGATIN</td>
<td>European Group Analytic Training Institutions Network</td>
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<td>GAS</td>
<td>Group Analytic Society</td>
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<td>GASi</td>
<td>GAS International, Group Analytic Society International</td>
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<tr>
<td>IGA</td>
<td>Institute of Group Analysis</td>
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<td>IPA</td>
<td>International Psychoanalytical Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>MBT</td>
<td>Mentalization-based treatment, Mentalization-based Therapy</td>
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<td>MBT-G</td>
<td>Mentalization-based Group Therapy</td>
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<td>MFGA</td>
<td>Multifamily groupanalysis</td>
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<td>PSG</td>
<td>Portuguese school of groupanalysis</td>
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<td>SPG</td>
<td>Portuguese Society of Groupanalysis</td>
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<td>SPGPAG</td>
<td>Sociedade Portuguesa de Grupanálise e Psicoterapia Analítica de Grupo, Portuguese Society of Groupanalysis and Analytic Group Psychotherapy</td>
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Introduction

Isaura Manso Neto and Margarida França

In this book, we will argue that group analysis is used as a therapeutic way to access the unconscious, providing introspection, insight, and development of the self. It is a psychoanalytic treatment of the individual in and through the group. Its aims are similar to those of psychoanalysis. Nevertheless, it can also be used in other settings without therapy as its main purpose.

As Portuguese group analysts, we owe our group analytic tradition to Eduardo Luís Cortesão (1919–1991), and some of his immediate followers, who worked in Lisbon from the early 1950s onwards. Although Portugal was under a dictatorship, Cortesão and some others managed to start working with groups in psychiatric hospitals and other public institutions by means of the creation of a Study Group in 1958. In 1960, the first General Meeting was held, which led to the establishment in 1963 of the Group Analytic Section of the Portuguese Society of Neurology and Psychiatry which worked under this designation until 1981 (Pinto & Salgado, 2001, 2002). This subsection gave birth to the Portuguese Society of Group Analysis (SPG) in December 1981 (Pinto & Salgado, 2002). In 2012, the SPG changed its name to the ‘Sociedade Portuguesa de Grupanálise e Psicoterapia Analítica de Grupo’ [Portuguese Society of Group Analysis and Analytic Group Psychotherapy] (SPGPAG) to reflect its activities more precisely.

We think that Cortesão’s proposals were far ahead of his time in many aspects: he developed Foulkes’s ideas from a deeper psychoanalytic perspective, integrated South American authors perspectives, gave great importance to the therapist’s role in the process far away from the neutrality preconized by classical psychoanalysis and closer to the relational paradigm that has taken its place, among other things. Many chapters in this book will approach considerations on theory and technique that Cortesão and his followers had, and examine why those ideas are still useful. Although Cortesão was also an English speaker (as was his mother) he wrote only a few articles in English. His more important work, a book called “Grupanálise—Teoria e Técnica” [Group Analysis—Theory and Technique] (1989) has only ever been published in Portuguese. We believe this justifies the importance of this particular publication.