

Brief responses and notes to an excellent Keynote speech of Dr Janek Dubowski 'An Ancient Memory from the Distant Past and the Arts Therapies now and for the Future 'on EcArte remote conference 24 September, 2021.

First of all, I would like to thank you, dr. Janek, for the training seminars. Since 2002 you were coming to conduct training in Lithuania several times, and I have had the pleasure to participate in your Art Therapy seminars. I remember not only valuable skills and knowledge in art therapy that you kindly shared with us, but also your curious attention to Lithuania, and mutual respect to our history and culture, noticing ancient and archaic Baltic roots and getting acquainted with all painful Lithuanian history paths.

Regarding the Green Bridge in Vilnius, the soviet sculptures have been moved away; after many controversial discussions, the decision has been made to put rectangle shape constructions, empty inside, to fit the old bridge (older than sculptures) architectural and historical content. I think it will be suitable for the participants of EcArte Conference to see this bridge when you come to Vilnius in September 2022.

In his talk, dr. Janek raises essential questions and constructs nice parallels with Art Therapies and traumatic memories, and reminds us the Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris. Re-membering, Dis-membering, the playful and informative messages coded in words becoming even more enriched and expanded when the meaning of similar words are looked at in other languages. That is the way that brings us to the infinite wisdom of the mythical ancient world.

Another thought that comes to my mind is about the history of EcArte (was found in 1991) and the recent history of Lithuania when in 1990 Lithuania fight and succeeded to get back the freedom (in-dependency). It has been done much in the field of Arts Therapies in Lithuania during that 30 years. It was stimulated by open possibilities for international cooperation and actively devoted colleagues. People interested in Art Therapies were ready for the breakthrough of the field in the country. One of the reasons for that could be that Arts was a vital form of resistance to the Soviet regime in our country, giving other forms than words possibility and ability to talk, express and understand. EcArte tries to incorporate broad international identities of the countries and emphasise historical memories, and I think that will enrich every participant in Vilnius 2021-2022 Conference.

It was so nice, unexpected and appropriate when dr. Janek shared memories of meeting him in Vilnius and cited from a summary of Doctoral Dissertation "Art Therapy as an Integral System; Contextual Analysis" of Lithuanian philosopher Kestutis Sapoka: "Contemporary art therapy is a complex integrated unit of ideas and therapy practices that combine the various and often contradictory theoretical opinions, methodological approaches and practical methods of the activity. " By nice coincidence, I've also met dr. Kestutis Sapoka personally for a short time. I've shared my memories of when he came 2021 January and gave me his newest Monograph, "The quasi-esthetical action of psychopathology" (I was one of the reviewers) through the window of 1st floor because of Covid quarantine restrictions. (Same day I've written about this conference and our memories to dr. Kestutis; he has nicely responded to dr. Janek and me, and put the link to the English summary of his Monograph).

Dr. Janek in his talk, nicely described developments in EcArte and comprised difficulties in understanding and cooperation to as one Family. Here all the Family Systems dynamic principles work and need to be understood and acknowledged when looking for more flexible and constructive communications. These tensions are closely related to family dynamics. Conflicts are very natural in the process of communication of family members. The Cooperative Style of conflict-solving styles

seems to be the most mature and beneficial, incorporates respect, ability to talk, listen, discuss and understand. There are many other fields and disciplines around Art Therapies (Psychology, Psychotherapy, Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, etc.) that overlaps and could be seen as members of Extended Family were interactive dynamic styles for cooperations and communications are also in the process of the development.

Dr. Janek has highlighted the peculiarities of Art Therapist specialties: Art part and Therapy part, „Artist“ and „Therapist“ and tensions between these two identities that should be acknowledged. Also important questions related to necessities to „Manualise“ the practices. Agreeing with the author, I would like to add that these necessities become very actual when we have Art Therapies in 2 year Master programs incorporated into the curriculum of Universities. Graduation work often requires from students manualisation, clear description, etc. – that makes the defence process easier. Necessity to find ways to implement qualitative methods together with quantitative seems to be utmost important and significant for graduating colleagues as a challenging task to fulfill all the academic and scientific requirements and also build own therapeutic identity.

Putting Philosophy as a member of Extended Family of Arts therapies could broaden overview and serve as a release from unnecessary tensions. I am citing dr. Janek speech: „ Art therapy Departments offering our patients an alternative creative sanctuary within Institution. This kind of „space“ is an example of what the Philosopher Michael Foucault termed, Heterotopias – places functioning in non-hegemonic conditions that are simultaneously physical and psychological, an attempt to create an imaginary utopia“. When it comes to research, dr. Janek sees danger to „consider our professions and practices to be somehow „Alternative“. But peculiarities of the field also need to be explored, withstood and represented.

Here I would like to stop and give space for thought, and I hope we will meet in EcArte Vilnius Conference next year and have possibilities for the discussions and sharing.

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