Understanding emotion and emotionality in a process of change

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Abstract *Aspects of the psychodynamics of organisation change are explored and in particular how emotion and emotionality should be conceived. A case is made to go beyond the dichotomous world of "rational" versus "emotional" and develop a greater appreciation of how the rational and the emotional can be "fused" or act in a co-existent and co-dependent fashion where one cannot be understood in the absence of the other. Read through the optic of identity, acts of so called rationality may simply be an expression of a deeper, albeit unconscious realm – psychodynamics in which emotion and emotionality are significant. It is through the optic of identity that the individual's attachment to the organisation is described and the meaning of behaviour in the midst of change is canvassed. It is noted that, depending upon the degree of identification with the organisation, one encounters behaviours that reflect dislodgement of identity and those more commonly associated with the processes of grieving. Some tentative strategies are advanced in managing these behaviours.*

Introduction

In our everyday experience in work organisations we have become all too familiar with the idea that "rationality" – along with its close cousin, "efficiency" – is the sensible "good guy" that is to be used as the touchstone by managers. In the shadows it seems there "lurks" a perceived alternative or dichotomous "bad guy" called "emotion" or "emotionality". Emotion and emotionality come to be portrayed as having to be avoided and rationality is to assume an uncontestable and privileged status. Of course the quintessential organisation, designed to install rationality and eliminate emotionality, is our most pervasive organisational form – bureaucracy.

This style of thinking which is, at least in part, based upon dichotomy and binary opposition, is very common to Western societies. For example, we talk about right or wrong; nature or nurture; public or private; heart or head; quality or quantity; and, of course, rational or emotional, etc. These are very familiar oppositions. Of course, when we use these opposites we often do so in a context of elevating one term while simultaneously inferring a denigration of the other. Cixous (1986, p. 63) observes that oppositional terms are locked into a relationship of conflict and, moreover, this relationship is one in which one term must be repressed at the expense of the other in a struggle for predominance.

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However, nature without nurture seems meaningless, for example, but often nurture struggles to negate the influence of nature. This binary opposition in the psychological literature is epitomised in the familiar notion of splitting. Splitting, fundamentally, involves dichotomising the world into "good" and "bad" and is necessarily accompanied by the processes of projection and projective identification. Sarup (1996) has recently noted such a connection:

> In binarism, one term represents the dominant centre, the other term represents the subordinate margin. The important thing about binarism is that it operates in the same way as splitting and projection: the centre expels its anxieties and contradictions onto the subordinate term. The Other often mirrors and represents what is deeply familiar to the centre, but projected out of itself.

Western rationality seems also to simultaneously embrace what Irigaray (see Whitford, 1991) has observed to be the principle of non-contradiction, where we strive to reduce ambivalence and ambiguity to an absolute minimum. If one position is right, then the other must be wrong. In such a logical system, two propositions cannot be true simultaneously. One proposition must prevail, and the other must accordingly be vanquished (see Carr and Zanetti, 1999).

The discourse in organisation studies displays the hallmarks of this dichotomous style of thinking. Unfortunately, it leads us astray in understanding the true dynamics of human behaviour, particularly those that occur during a period of change. In the discourse we do find a heavy emphasis upon the cognitive domain – describing what goes on in organisations in fairly bland terms and, in that sense, de-emotionalising or presenting a sanitised and skewed understanding of what transpires and gets played out in organisations. Additionally, we find emotion commonly depicted as merely some kind of performative act or form of display that should be able to be under the control of the "actor" – an extreme social constructionist view which, amongst other things, fails to reveal how and why our feelings can be at odds with rationality. Indeed, as Fineman (2000, p. 2) points out, this extreme social constructionist view "refutes the idea that emotions are 'in' people, ready to be studied".

Most conspicuous in this discourse, and a useful starting point for our broader analysis, forms of involvement are conceived as a process of mutual influence and a bargained outcome between the employer and employee. This exchange process has been considered to be highly rational – the exemplar of which we can note in what was originally dubbed the psychological contract by Schein (1970). The actual dynamics of this interactive process have largely eluded description in the discourse, other than being viewed, as they were by Schein (1970), as a mutually bargained outcome involving an awareness by the parties involved.

Rationality has become so endogenous to our modelling of the change process that it is all too easy to overlook emotion and emotionality. Indeed, acting rationally, according to the principle of non-contradiction, necessarily excludes the bad guy called emotion and would, at the same time, appear to require no other validation – such is the pervasiveness of this touchstone. The problem of this style of thinking is that, at best, we get only a partial

appreciation of the behaviour of the players in the change process. Indeed, we are led astray as to the very meaning of the behaviour in question.

In order to gain a deeper appreciation of how emotion and emotionality are to be read in organisational change, it is very instructive to view them through the optic of identity. The psychodynamics associated with our essential being, or character, would seem a particularly potent starting point if we are to come to an understanding of the meaning of behaviour in organisations and, more specifically, emotion and emotionality. Indeed, by using the optic of identity it becomes apparent that, rather than being in a binary opposition, the "rational" and "emotional" constitute a rich inter-relationship in which these putative "poles" are often "fused" or act in a co-existent and co-dependent fashion where one cannot be understood in the absence of the other[1].

Identity, emotion and emotionality: some psychodynamic dimensions

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, was one of the first to discover that behaviour was prompted by both conscious and unconscious mental processes. Emotions and emotionality are generally assumed in psychoanalytic theory to be an *affect* (see Rycroft, 1995, pp. 4 and 46; English and English, 1958, p. 15) and, while we are conscious of them as a manifestation, what prompts the "affective impulse" are mental processes – the dynamics of which the person may be largely unaware. In some circumstances, Freud (1984a, p. 180) concluded that "an affective impulse is perceived but misconstrued".

Emotion and emotionality, Freud was to suggest, are, from the earliest period of an individual's maturation, crucial to the issue of the development of one's identity. Moreover, he suggested that in interpreting the "affective response" one needed to be cognisant that the issue of identity may be implicated. Identity, as our essential being, might not only be a source of the affective response, but also help explain the strength/intensity/robustness of the response.

Freud argued that an individual "gains" his/her identity through the psychodynamics of narcissism, identification and the ego-ideal which were intertwined processes that have "emotional content". In discussing these intertwined processes, Freud observes that "Identification is known to psychoanalysis as the earliest expression of an *emotional tie* with another person. It plays a part in the early history of the Oedipus complex" (1985, p. 134, italics added). To somewhat "unpack" the intertwined nature of these psychodynamics involved in identity, it is probably most helpful to commence our discussion by first considering the matter of narcissism.

Initially, Freud's use of the term narcissism was by way of a footnote added to an essay some five years after the essay had been written. That essay was entitled "The sexual aberrations" (Freud, 1977). Later he was to acknowledge (Freud, 1984b, p. 65) that this footnote employed the term narcissism in the same way that Paul Nacke had used it in 1899, to refer to "sexual perversion". Freud was attempting to explain the object-choice of homosexuals.

The use of the term narcissism as a label for a type of personality disorder or aberrant behaviour was soon revised by Freud. This revision, hailed by some as one of Freud's "most magnificent discoveries" (Adorno, 1968, p. 88), was not well understood by many who followed him, including, arguably, such people as Erich Fromm (1979/1982) and Bruno Bettelheim (1983/1989). Adorno (1968, p. 88) actually argued that "psychoanalytic theory has still not proved equal" to Freud's discovery. More recently, Ornston (1992, p. 73) has charged Bettelheim (correctly in my view) with ignoring Freud's "careful description of narcissism as ubiquitous and necessary to loving". Indeed, the term "narcissism" is commonly used today to refer to an individual who is overly preoccupied with themselves or their own interests. In its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (1987) The American Psychiatric Association uses the term to describe a pathological condition: a personality disorder where an individual has an excessive concern for power and control that may lead to exploitative behaviour. On a larger scale the term has been employed in a negative sense, and in a sense of ill-health, to denounce what is seen as a collective pathology for a whole society (e.g. see Lasch, 1974, 1985). The view of narcissism as a disorder and pathology is, of course, derived from an aspect of the Roman poet Publius Ovidius Naso's (43 BC – AD 17) tale about Narcissus, a youthful son of a nymph, who falls in love with his own reflection in a pool of water: "unwittingly, he desired himself, and was himself the object of his own approval" (Ovid, 1955, p. 85).

In a paper entitled "On narcissism …" (1984b) Freud revised his initial view of narcissism, noting that erotic self-centeredness was not confined to homosexuals but appeared to be part of a more general and normal process of psychosexual development. It was not, he wrote, "a perversion but the libidinal complement to the egoism of the instinct of self-preservation, a measure of which may justifiably be attributed to every creature" (Freud, 1984b, p. 66). Under this revision Freud argued that before and soon after birth the individual's wishes, desires and drives (libido) are principally focused upon the development of self, the ego-libido, with self as an initial erotic object. Subsequently, the individual may gain libido satisfaction through an attachment to objects, e.g. the mother's breast, in what Freud called object-libido. Later, the individual may find these objects are not always available and may create substitute satisfactions, e.g. replacing the nipple with sucking a finger.

The actual relationship between ego-libido and object-libido Freud viewed as being amoeba-like in its operation (see Freud, 1984b, p. 68; 1973, pp. 465-6; 1986a, p. 155; 1984c, pp. 404-6). Freud (1986a, p. 155) suggested that "the ego is to be regarded as a great reservoir of libido from which libido is sent out to objects and which is always ready to absorb libido flowing back from objects". This absorbing or taking back of libido into the ego from external objects Freud called secondary narcissism. This was to distinguish it from primary narcissism, a term he used for the first narcissism where the child took itself as its love-object rather than external objects.

The significance of the "seesaw-like" arrangement between the ego-libido and the object-libido is that the more one is used the more the other is depleted, and, as Alford (1988, p. 25) observes:

> … the amoeba model makes clear there is a cost involved [in abandoning one's primary narcissism]: in object love the self is depleted of libido, and there is a necessary decrease in narcissistic satisfaction. While being loved in return may provide considerable narcissistic gratification, it is not sufficient to compensate for the loss. It is in this context that Freud introduces the concept of the ego ideal.

In introducing the concept of the ego-ideal, Freud (1984b, p. 88) initially argued that the individual "is not willing to forgo the narcissistic perfection of his childhood (and) … seeks to recover it in the new form of an ego ideal. What he projects before him as his ideal is the substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood in which he was his own ideal". The ego-ideal, Freud (1985, p. 137) suggested, is established through three different forms of identification:

> First, identification … in the original form of [an] emotional tie with an object; second, in a regressive way … [as] a substitute for a libidinal object-tie, as it were by means of introjection of the object into the ego; and thirdly … [as] a new perception of a common quality shared with some other person who is not an object of the sexual instinct.

Laplanche and Pontalis (1988) captured the essence and importance of the notion of identification when they defined it as a "psychological process whereby the subject assimilates an aspect, property or attribute of the other and is transformed, wholly or partially, after the model the other provides. *It is by means of a series of identifications that the personality is constituted and specified*" (Laplanche and Pontalis, p. 205, italics added). Also, as we have previously noted, Freud believed identification was associated with "emotional content".

In developing his second theory of the "mind", Freud posited the now familiar realms of id, ego, and super-ego. In so doing he was forced to reconsider some of his previous ideas. Badcock (1988) aptly captured and summarised some fundamental revisions that were a consequence of this second theory:

> Finally, the ego was faced with demands originating in the so called *superego*, a specialized subdivision of itself which was based on identification and internalization of the more competent, dominant egos which the child found around itself. In the main, the superego took on its definitive form with the resolution of the Oedipus complex, involving an identification of the child with the values and ideals of the parents. Consequently, the superego provided a sense of moral and aesthetic self-judgement (conscience and values, in other words), both in a positive sense as acting as an *ego-ideal* and in the negative one in performing the role of censor of the ego's wishes... Failure to meet the demands of the superego created a feeling of *moral anxiety* (Badcock, 1988, p. 122, original emphasis).

The concept of the ego-ideal, as established and re-established through various identifications, was retained, including the narcissistic underpinning and the idea that narcissism is, as Alford (1988, p. 27) noted:

> never overcome, but rechanneled, because it represents an especially complete and profound mode of gratification, and man is loath to abandon a pleasure once experienced. If the ego

> ideal is immature …, this rechanneling will be ineffective and will lead to perversion: the quest for immediate gratification regardless of the appropriateness of the setting or the object. If the ego level is mature, on the other hand, narcissism may serve as a stimulus for the achievement of the highest ideals. For in striving to realize socially valued ideals, the ego moves closer to becoming one with its own ego ideal, thereby recapturing something of the perfection that the individual knew when he was the source and object of all the good in the world.

Writers such as Kohut (1971, 1977) and Alford (1988) have embraced the concept of narcissism, like any other trait, as a part of the human condition that is neither sick nor healthy, but has exaggerated forms, or the potential for a Janus-like nature. Where I stray from their interpretation of this term is really a matter of difference in emphasis, which, I suspect, stems from Strachey's unfortunate rendering of the German word *Anlehnung* as *anaclisis*. *Anaclisis* was used as an adjective to convey the idea of "to rest upon" or "to lean on" whereas the word *Anlehnung* "is the simple German word for dependence" (Mahony, 1992, p. 31, see also Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p. 29-31 for a similar argument). It is argued, therefore, that it is through identification that narcissism is transformed into a "dependence", not necessarily centered upon self, but an ego-ideal, satisfaction of which may come from alternative objects. It is in such a context that one quickly appreciates how Freud viewed emotion and emotionality and, in particular, how the "affective impulses" could be read as implicating the deep seated processes associated with identity.

Organisation change and the psychodynamics of identity, emotion and emotionality

The psychodynamics we have just discussed do get played out in the work organisation and are particularly evident during a period of organisation change. The group setting poses a particular context in which the psychodynamics we have just discussed become manifest. Freud, in "On narcissism" (1984b, p. 96), in linking individual psychology with group psycholog, asserts that "the ego ideal opens up an important avenue for the understanding of group psychology". Later, Freud was to explain how group psychology was really an extension of individual psychology (see Freud, 1985). In Freud's view, it is through the process of identification that the individual surrenders the current "ego ideal and substitutes for it the group ideal as embodied in the leader (Freud, 1985, p. 161) … [the group members] put one and the same object in place of their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego" (Freud, 1985, pp. 161, 147). Gay (1988, p. 405) tries to summarise Freud's position on this relationship by describing group psychology as "parasitic on individual psychology".

In becoming a member of a group, or organisation, the individual surrenders some of their individuality. The degree to which this occurs depends upon the strength of their projective identification and the strength of their introjective identification. If these identifications are continually reinforced through various forms of gratification then the sense of a created identity can be so strong that the prohibitive aspect of the super-ego may be disregarded and, as

others have commented, "its functions taken over by the group ideals" (Sandler, 1960, p. 156-7; see also Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1976, p. 363). Sandler (1960, p. 151) cites Second World War atrocities committed by the Nazis as an instance where "a complete character transformation" occurred through just such a process. The Nazis are but one instance of a more general case where the "enveloping" of the body with a uniform also seems to "envelope" the mind. Recent territorial hostilities and ethnic cleansing around the globe reveal that today this is still the case.

In the work organisation it can be readily comprehended how the reified organisation and/or its leaders could be raised to the status of an ego-ideal. Indeed, the organisation and its leaders, through symbolic, material and other means, may satisfy narcissistic needs so well that the employee views their own identity in terms of their work context. This is particularly enhanced in Western cultures that define an individual's "worth" in terms of the status of their employment. The monetary and/or status outcome compounds the degree of narcissistic gratification.

Schwartz (1987) builds the case for the substitution of the ego-ideal with an organization-ideal when he argues the following:

> Freud refers to the specification of the person one must become in order to return to narcissism as the *ego ideal*. Recognizing that the ego ideal is defined in terms of social interaction in which the ego ideal is embedded, and by which it is defined, as itself a discernible ideal entity. We can see this ideal entity taking various forms, as defined by ideology: the community of saved souls, the community of post-revolutionary society, etc. For our purposes, we may limit discussion to the case in which the ego ideal takes the form of an organization. Giving this ideal pattern of organization a name, we shall refer to it as the organization ideal (Schwartz, 1987, p. 331, original emphasis).

The organization-ideal, like the ego-ideal, is really a fantasy that is seldom achieved. However, narcissistic satisfaction is achieved from efforts to reduce the degree to which the ego and the ideal differ. This said, it is the "leaders" in the organization that progressively seek to impart their version of the organization-ideal to their employees. The employee is encouraged to make a series of identifications with aspects of the organization and to assimilate attributes, values and cultural substance (Trice and Beyer, 1993) into their "organization-ideal". This encouragement is psychologically linked to fragments of the earlier (childhood) narcissistic experience of being "loved and protected by a powerful entity" (Baum, 1989, p. 194). As Benjamin adds, "the wish to restore early *omnipotence*, or to realize the fantasy of control, never ceases to motivate the individual" (Benjamin, 1995, p. 54, italics added). In effect, the encouragement of an organization-ideal creates a psychological bonding to the organization and can be such that the individual's self identity is obtained through the work she/he does that is approved or rewarded by the organization. Schwartz argues that:

> Committed organizational participants, who require that the organization specify an identity for them, are precisely those who have the need to believe this. They are thus likely to feel that the deviations from the organization ideal are the result of the fact that it is *they* who do not fulfil the conditions of the identity. The resultant feeling therefore must be one of personal

> responsibility for failure – the anxiety experienced as personal shortcomings, or shame (Schwartz, 1987, p. 333, italics added).

It is being argued here, therefore, that the individual is drawn into a psychological relationship with the organization, or its leaders, that is progressive, and in a sense is a revival of an earlier narcissistic dependency. Indeed, if one were to attempt to resist such "bonding", not only is one deprived of the experience akin to narcissistic gratification and parental figure approval, but also other psychologically and emotionally traumatic experiences related to exclusion come into play (see Lemert's (1962) classic study of the psychological consequences of exclusion).

A number of recent studies (Maccoby, 1976; La Bier, 1983, 1986; Carr, 1991, 1993; see Carr, 1998 for an overview) have shown that the organization-ideal is one that has a psychological fingerprint in as much as the encouragement to identify with certain values, attitudes and ways of conceiving the work role appears to have left its mark in form of stimulating particular character types or psychostructures. The term psychostructure was used by Maccoby (1976), La Bier (1983; 1986) and Carr (1991, 1993, 1996) to try to convey the imagery regarding the different clusters of traits that seem to be stimulated and reinforced by different forms and different hierarchical levels of work. For Maccoby, La Bier and Carr this imagery captured what seemed to emerge from the data they had collected from studying a number of work organizations. They, collectively, suggest that a selecting and molding of character may occur in trying to achieve the organization-ideal.

As if to underline the psychodynamics we have just described, and in particular the relationship between the individual and the organisation, let me give one example by way of illustration. In the study of school principals, conducted by the author of this paper and referred to previously (see Carr, 1991, 1993, 1998), which had much to do with organisation change, I encountered a principal who we shall call "John". John is a mild mannered, energetic individual who has an abhorrence for violence. Then in his mid-40s, he is considered by many in the teaching profession to be one of the most successful school principals and rumour had it that there was a waiting list for staff wanting to transfer into his school. I interviewed John as preliminary data revealed he had an extreme level of anxiety. In an official report his psychiatrist had just described John as "living on overdrawn emotional resources". The object of the interview was to gain insight into what was causing the anxiety and the methodology used focussed upon an analysis of dreams. Freud (1986b, p. 769), as is often cited, described "the interpretation of dreams as the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious". I assumed that the person may be unaware of their sources of anxiety and dreams were the "royal road" to the authentic discovery of the anxiety. In my interview with him, John related a dream which might at first seem bizarre, or at least out of character:

> "I dreamt that I was on the top of a hill and defending the 'last post'. I had a machine gun – a Gatling gun. I was defending me, I would suspect, there was never anyone else there but me …". John felt he was under siege from various work-related interest groups. In making associations with the dream he declared "I tend to identify with my work and I don't know

> what I can do about it – in the sense that my work and I became part of the same thing. Me is also my work. Now a threat to my work then becomes a threat to me" (Carr, 1998, pp. 90-1).

In another dream John said he was "fearful of not meeting the expectations of the Education Department and the consequences I imagined would happen to me as a result of non-performance. The omnipotent father figure who came down like a ton of bricks …" (Carr, 1998, p. 31). Little commentary seems necessary here as the psychodynamics seem well captured in John's words.

The discourse in organisation studies, as we noted earlier in this paper, has traditionally viewed the relationship between the individual and the organisation as a form of socialisation. As was also noted earlier, perhaps the most pervasive description of such a relationship is that captured by Schein (1970) in his notion of the psychological contract. For Schein, the psychological contract involved reciprocation (contribution – inducement) where the employee and employer became engaged in an interactive process of mutual influence and bargaining (see Schein, 1970; also Goddard, 1984; Kotter, 1973; Rousseau, 1987; Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1988; Sims, 1991; Wahn, 1993). What was actually exchanged and the psychodynamics involved were never made clear. Also the whole notion of an embodied experience and having some ontological security (Laing, 1960) rather than a fragmented and somewhat schizoid existence between the self and other, is something that seems to have bypassed the attention of the discourse (see Carr, 2000). The framework put forward, and illustrated, in this paper would suggest the processes involved in the relationship between employee and organization are: deep-seated; largely unconscious; intimately connected to the development of identity; and, have emotional content. Indeed, perhaps the term seducement is more appropriate than notions of mutual influence and negotiation, which are more often associated with high degrees of consciousness and rationality. These psychodynamics, when used as an optic to view change, bring into view or focus behaviour that is either obscured or neglected by the more "rational" systems approaches to change. Indeed, the whole meaning of behaviour can be misinterpreted.

Let us consider, for example, the most basic of issues in the process of change – that is diagnosing that there is something wrong in the organisation and it needs to be changed. Commonly a consultant is engaged who, after an initial evaluation, may suggest changes to how things are done. Sometimes the change is more dramatic, in as much as a new CEO is appointed and changes appear to rapidly follow. In the latter case, it is not uncommon to repeatedly hear in the corridors of the organisation the adage "a new broom sweeps clean" and/or some variant of "the CEO needs to mark their mark" or "this is change for change sake". This is all so familiar, as is the organisation members displaying feelings and emotions of frustration, suspicion, resistance, anger, despair, grief, stress. Others display emotions and feelings of joy, glee and hope for better things. Yet, others might show, or voice, feelings and emotions that seem to reflect ambivalence and unconcern for the changes. These emotions are all too easily misread and misattributed. They are emotional responses that

have a very understandable (rational) impulse. The psychodynamics described in this paper would suggest that, depending upon the degree of identification with the organisation-ideal, we might expect to encounter the behaviour that should be read as that commonly associated with having one's identity dislodged and, in the more intense cases, being viewed as associated with grieving. Indeed, it might be suggested that the analogue to organisation change, at least in part, is the process of grieving.

The employee, having raised the organisation and/or its leaders to a status similar to that of the ego-ideal, is experiencing the pain of loss but not simply that of the leader and/or the attributes, values and cultural substance (the underlying ideologies that pervade the organisation – see Trice and Beyer, 1993) that was prescribed as the organisational ideal. What is lost or dislodged, and what causes this anxiety in some, is the threat to the narcissistic gratification that the identification with the leader and the organisational ideal provided. A type of narcissistic injury has occurred to those who closely identified with that past, and, because it is so psychodynamically associated with one's identity, the emotionality can be somewhat "exaggerated", or at least viewed as such by observers. Freud (1984c), in commenting upon the connection between depression and mourning, makes a telling comment with significant implications for those considering organisation change, when he says:

> In what, now does the work which mourning performs consist? I do not think there is anything far-fetched in presenting it in the following way. Reality-testing has shown that the loved object no longer exists, and it proceeds to demand that all libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to that object. *This demand arouses understandable opposition – it is a matter of general observation that people never willingly abandon a libidinal position*, **not even, indeed, when a substitute is already beckoning to them**. *This opposition can be so intense that a turning away from reality takes place and a clinging to the object through the medium of a hallucinatory wishful psychosis. Normally respect for reality gains the day* (Freud, 1984c, p. 253, italics and bold are added emphasis).

In reading opposition to organisation change, the implications, from the above citation from Freud, include acknowledging this process of mourning as normal behaviour and giving members of an organisation time and help in that grieving process. This is in somewhat of a contrast to the "beltway bandits" of organisation change that often encourage organisations to promptly replace one set of structures and processes with another and view those who resist as simply being a nuisance, trouble-makers or worse. "Not even, indeed, when a substitute is already beckoning to them" are Freud's prophetic words that also alert us to why, even in the face of increased rewards for adopting and identifying with the reforms in an organisation, individual's organisations are slow to accept the changed circumstances and establish an attachment to the new object (organisation-ideal).

The psychoanalytic literature (see Rycroft, 1995, pp. 105-6; Moore and Fine, 1990, pp. 122-3) suggests that, as is inferred above, mourning seems to have three inter-related and successive phases: denial or rejection of the idea of the loss and often clinging to the mental representation of the lost "object"; resignation, despair and acceptance of the loss, which involves withdrawal of

attachment and identification with the lost object; adapting to life without the object which also often involves establishing new relationships and attachment to a new object. Benjamin (1995, p. 113) thoughtfully reminds us that "mourning … invites the Other" i.e. we should expect people will move to an attachment to a new object, but that movement may not be as fast as one would expect simply on the basis of "rationality". The psychodynamics of establishing the potential for narcissistic gratification will take time before identification and attachment to the new culture is achieved.

Grieving and the dislodgement of identity, in the framework developed in this paper, becomes one focussed upon understanding the development of the ego/organisation-ideal. The literature in organisation studies and in organisation change has largely neglected such a perspective but it should be kept in mind that these psychodynamics have both an individual and, interrelated, group context in which the behaviour becomes manifest. For example, some have observed, in the context of group dynamics in an organisation, that members of a group may exhibit a variety of behaviours with respect to the "death of a leader":

> Within the group there will be a modest division of labor, some acting as mourners, some as murderers, and others as the dead consultant-leader himself. Still others may seek to raise the dead. In general, however, the tone of this drama is dominated by the experience of deadness, the group's identification with the dead leader (Alford, 1994, p. 62).

The death of a leader here is, of course, used as a figure of speech, but the behaviours that are being described are those that we would have anticipated from the psychodynamics that we outlined earlier in which the ego-ideal is replaced by the group-ideal as embodied in its leader. Thus, it is suggested that future research in managerial psychology, particularly that which seeks to comprehend the management of change, might gainfully explore group dynamics that acknowledges mourning in the process of change.

The perspective developed in this paper is a relatively new one to the discourse of organisation studies and it has profound implications for reading the behaviour of those who manage and those who are the managed (see Carr and Zanetti, 1999, 2000). Notwithstanding the relative newness of this perspective, we do find some literature in organisational studies that could be helpful in the development of strategies to assist with grieving and the dislodgement of identity in the face of organisation change. Trice and Beyer (1993, see also Trice and Beyer 1984), for example, drawing particularly upon concepts from anthropology, have suggested that, in order to smooth the transition from the one organisation culture to another, the issue of rites should be considered. Among the specific rites that Trice and Beyer discuss are what they dub the "rites of transition" and the "rites of parting".

While these rites cannot be listed in a prescriptive manner for the obvious reasons of contingency, rites of transition involve strategies to allow the creation of forums within the organisation to "explore and acknowledge cultural change and its consequences" (Trice and Beyer, 1993, p. 126). This approach may assist in bringing to the surface the nature of what is to be "lost"

and assurances about the positive outcomes that the changes are expected to achieve. The "old" organisation-ideal can be placed into a context of transition to aid acceptance of the loss, but simultaneously it gives a clear understanding of the new organisational-ideal – the new "object" – to which identification is being encouraged. The rites of parting are generally focussed upon a demise of a whole organisation, but in the context of this paper what is being referred to is the opportunity to affirm the existence and benefits of the new, and the passage from the old. These opportunities could involve social gatherings where employees affected by the change get the chance to gain emotional support and confidence as to their organisation identity. Opportunities could also be in the form of "good news stories" arising from the changes. The form that these rites take would seem fertile ground for case study experience – experience that does acknowledge, psychodynamically, that the rational and the emotional can be fused or act in a co-existent and co-dependent fashion.

Note

1. The material contained in this paper represents an elaboration and refinement of a previous work, namely Carr (1999).

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