

Preface to the book "Methodology for Federico Navarro's Character-Analysis Vegetotherapy
(soon to be published in Greece)

I am deeply honoured to be introducing part of the history of Character-Analytical Vegetotherapy, which is the analytical-therapeutic foundation of Reichian and post-Reichian thought. This intense, concise book, which was written in 1990 and later published by my beloved teacher, Federico Navarro photographs a decisive transition in this extraordinary methodology, which I would define today as being structuring, systematizing and clinical in moving from Vegetotherapy of state to Vegetotherapy of bodily level.

Transitions over time, as we are well aware, resemble the stages of evolutive processes: each following on, one from the other, often integrating and ordering towards greater negentropy and always preceding a further transition which will, once again, integrate and order even further. Time is the great nutriment of the processes of evolution and, even while falsifying, it is selecting them.

As should be clear, I am also introducing the negentropic arrow of time for Character-Analytical Vegetotherapy, which has been spread across four generations of therapist-analysts. Starting from the very beginning, I would like to offer the reader a view of the most significant staging-areas - Indeed, I firmly believe that it is only by narrating the whole scene in its becoming that the important collocation of this Navarrian work can be shown.

Both direct evidence and illustrative quotations of my prestigious forebears follow.

Character-Analytical Vegetotherapy made its first appearance on the horizons of the Reichian school in 1935:

*"Reich noted that when the armouring dissolves, a wave of spontaneous, involuntary movement manifests in the body, from the throat downwards.
If the patient is lying on their back with their knees raised at 45 degrees (the normal position on the couch in the Reichian setting), breathing deeply, their head tilts back slightly, their shoulders move a little lower, as do the chest and abdomen, and the pelvic area rises slightly...
Movements are made which are very similar to a reflex which Reich defined as orgasmic"*

Ola Raknes

"When the orgasmic reflex was discovered in 1935, the emphasis of treatment moved from the character to the body. The term Vegetotherapy, recognised this change..."

We speak of Character-Analytical Vegetotherapy as we understand the analytical work on the psychic apparatus and on the body as one thing only..."

Neurosis is not only the expression of a disturbance to the psychic equilibrium, but is also the expression of a chronic disturbance to the vegetative equilibrium..."

Loosening chronic characterial behaviour permits us to obtain reactions in the NVS, and to also free corresponding muscular behaviour..."

It is surprising to see how the softening of muscular rigidity also brings the situation in which the repression of the impulse occurred back to mind..."

Muscular behaviour makes it possible to avoid complicated detours through the psychic structures..."

W. Reich

Cosmic orgonic energy, identified in 1939, **however** led Reich to coin the term Orgonic Therapy... this discovery, I usually say, sequestered him, intrigued as he was by the illusions emanating from a far more complex truth, making him skip over a rough diamond without noticing it, selecting it and refining it.

"Be it either that the emotions of chararterial armouring are mobilised by Character Analysis, or that they are mobilised from muscular armouring by Vegetotherapy, the result is that plasmatic movements and excitation are caused. What is moving in this process is no other than orgonic energy which is linked to the fluids in the body."

W. Reich

In that bold **however** a few lines above we slip into the liquidity of that brilliant psychocorporeal paradigm introduced by W. Reich, so clear today to we who are the fourth generation of analysts.

By bringing that precise point into focus we can gather the details...

For three decades the path that had led continuously from Character Analysis, 1926-1934, (the first well-identified diamond) to Vegetotherapy, 1935-1939, and on to Orgone Therapy in 1939 had remained unaltered, intact and unquestioned.

Vegetotherapy was, so to speak, a background experience, given little importance and only seen as propaedeutic to orgone therapy – indeed, it was a rough diamond.

It is from this perspective that the figure of Federico Navarro assumes extraordinary importance, since it was he, together with Ola Raknes, even without being fully aware, gave a structuring, negentropic, illuminating direction to the evolutive process of post-Reichian thought and to Character-Analytical Vegetotherapy in particular.

"It was during his holiday to Stromboli in 1965 that Navarro discovered Reich. He had taken an anthology of Reich's writings with him, which was introduced by Luigi De Marchi and entitled "The theory of the orgasm and other writings".

On his return to Naples he found that his enthusiasm was shared by a certain number of friends and colleagues.

The idea of doing a trianing course in Reichian Vegetitherapy was put forward, but the means for acomplishing this seemed to be close to inexstent. The only possible solution would be to turn to the Norwegian, Ola Raknes, who was a faithful disciple of Reich and had been trained by him. Once contacted, Raknes (who was already a psychoanalyst, having trained with K.Horney and was also already a vegetotherapist, having trained with W. Reich for three years) agrred to spend his holidays in Italy for a few years.

Thus, over the next three years, Navarro and his colleagues received practical training from Ola Raknes which would be the basis for their therapeutic activities.

Roger Dadoun

"At the end of the training course, as they are called, in Vegetotherapy, that I did with Reich's student, friend and cllaborator, Ola Raknes, he asked me if I had any observations to make. Marked as I was by my traditional training in neuropsychiatry, I replied that the clinical methodology had not been sorted out and that it needed intelligent systematisation... In fact, Reich had not established a true methodology.

Raknes turned to me with a distant look in his eyes, told me I was right and, after a silence, added "Reich didn't do it, because, at a certain point, he became wholly occupied with orgonic research, but, if you wish, you may do it.

I worked on the methodology a great deal and I offered it to Raknes before he died. This is how today's Vegetotherapy was born, which is progressive methodological work on the seven levels, starting from the eyes, to move the energy, to permit it to circulate from the top downwards, to then be expressed with orgasmic potency".

Federico Navarro

This short book informs us clearly and concisely, without doing justice to the immense clinical and human experience of the author, but which, however, indubitably contains precious material which will be invaluable to every psychotherapist who includes corporeity in their considerations and indispensable to Reichian psychotherapists.

Psychotherapy is, indeed, not complete unless the cortico-spinal pathways are passed through, or, rather, unless feeling and action are passed through to reach knowledge... and you cannot feel without the body!

Vegetotherapy of bodily level, as I like to refer to it, which is linear and top-down from the first to the seventh level, represented my training, which I undertook with Federico Navarro for more than 10 years and, contemporaneously, I was collaborating with him professionally and within SIAR, the Italian Society of Reichian Analysis, of which he was the Honorary President until his death in 2002, and which I still have the honour of directing today.

My personal training in Vegetotherapy of bodily level with Federico Navarro represented the **indispensable** platform for what I consider to be the following stage in this cohesive continuum – Vegetotherapy of stage, trait and bodily level, which derives from the bottom-up reading of Ontogenetic functionality, which includes and completes the preceding top-down interpretation.

Looking back, I would date the beginning of this latest development back to 1983, carrying its importance through to the most recent, present-day developments of the concept of the Trait Mind.

It was, in fact, a lively and heated debate between Federico Navarro and myself about which bodily levels are actually involved in psychosis, in Valencia at a European School of Orgonotherapy (SEOR) congress, which would, in time, lead to this further progress. At the end of our discussion, Federico agreed with me, with the great intellectual honesty and authenticity which was typical of him, that the primary blockage of psychosis lies in the 6th bodily level, which is the level of intauterine life and that the evident blockage in the first bodily level only represented the epiphany, since it was more easily visible to the observer in examining the patient.

The latest stage of evolution in the negentropic history of Vegetotherapy really began with this apparent difficulty, which was not a bifurcation-point. In fact, the ontogenetically-bottom-up sequence of the bodily levels from the very beginning of life was added.

The negentropic arrow of time was introduced; the evolutive stages were redefined in 3D; the bodily levels were connected to the relationships with the partial stage objects; the imprints and the marks they incised clarified the patterns of character traits and the real story of the person was taken away from the peripheral afferents to the central nervous system.

Vegetotherapy, with its actings, was welcomed back into the fold of Analytical Psychotherapy (Reichian Analysis), but, this time with the body included and the analytical-therapeutic relationship was enriched by the counter-transference of appropriate trait and bodily level, modulated appropriately by the actings... Everything was clear... The intelligent sense of the Elan Vital became Logos in the body.

The Reichian analytical model re-gained vitality, the diamond that Navarro had seen, was progressively polished to an illuminating splendour – scientific and epistemological coherence provided the opportunity for advancing with, and very often ahead of, the times, in weaving together a variety of scientific disciplines, not least among which are the neurosciences. Pressing, but fascinating, debates and validations, so as to perfect the guide-lines for ever-greater appropriacy in psychotherapy and psychopathology.

The actings elaborated by Reich, together with those of Raknes, Navarro and Ferri-Siar, today line-up in three-dimensional continuity which covers almost all of the windows of the stages of development, so as to make the insertion of the vegetotherapy password ever more surgical, to enter the floors inhabited by our trait minds and to harmonise them... But I will tell you more about that another time, in a future book.

