

Social Dynamics of Self Organising in the light of historical evidence from the Tavistock Institute Archive

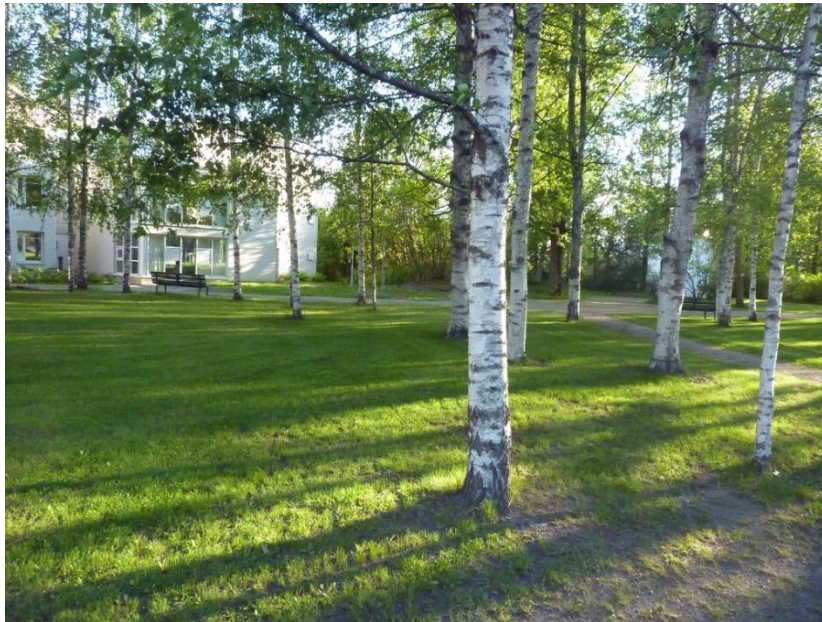
Juliet Scott, Principal Consultant and Artist in Residence, The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations

Who's afraid of hierarchy? - M0De research seminar

Juliet Scott, Principal Consultant and Artist in Residence, The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations.

13th November 2019

Finland



It is my great pleasure to have been invited to speak on behalf of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations at this M0De research seminar 'Who's afraid of Hierarchy?' and to be here in Helsinki on what is my second visit to Finland. My first was 10 years ago when I was in my earlyish days as a Tavistock practitioner bringing experiential learning to an organisational training programme at the Metanoia Institute. The venue was probably one of the loveliest I have worked in - the building architecturally precise, spacious and light; next to a lake and the sibilant silver birch surrounding.

What I have been asked to do in this paper is to draw on the historical evidence of the Tavistock Institute's archive to illuminate or I might add the possibility that it might put into shade, the questions of self-management and minimalism in 'organising' that this research programme is concerned with. Starting with a word of warning to myself. In doing this I want to avoid what is often a temptation for those of us working in the Tavistock tradition to conclude of many of the new organisational paradigms that are emerging, that this, 'self-management', isn't new, as this was the bread and butter of Tavistock work in the 1940's and 50's when semi-autonomous working was amongst a number of organisational strategies emerging as part of post war reconstruction and changes in industry. That's what we often say. It happens in other areas of our work and in the UK there is a buzz right now about so called developmental evaluation with its focus on iterative learning which was the cornerstone of evaluation work happening at the Institute in the 1980s as an evolution of its action research tradition. In our archive symposium last week we heard about how the Institute's evaluation work with the London Lighthouse - a care provision for people with HIV/AIDs, worked in real time with the service and its patients to understand what patient centred care really meant in the context of terminal illness at the time. However I am not sure that this 'it's been done before' position does us justice or what even it means to draw on archival sources, which in my experience is dynamic, activating and often humbling. Last week I was at Wellcome Library looking at the archive with a group of dancers/academics who are researching the experience of people with disabilities. Their archival encounter with a Tavistock project on attitudes to disability in the 1970s more than prefigured what they believed to be the attitudes of the time. They were surprised, some of the language was clunky. Handicapped was used instead of disability, but the study itself was concerned with the psychology of exclusion, the experience of the disabled people themselves, explanations for their marginalisation in society.

Instead my aim is for the shadow or light of the archive to be more of an unfolding of 'self organising' as it has continuously been seen through the lens of a Tavistock social science that has emerged and developed over the last 70 plus years. That what we discover through the archive is a journey in working with organisations in their changing context over time and we see how understanding them has both changed and remained constant- it evolves from the early socio psychological work to socio technical systems to a wider social

ecology and organisational complexity and along the way adapting with social science and organisational trends. The task of the Institute has always remained the same “To work with the organisational and (and to use a contemporary descriptor ‘wicked’) societal problems of our time for the betterment of working conditions in them”. For those of you less familiar with the organisation and the Tavistock tradition I will come back to that before long.

Object Relations



Still Life over Object Relations card AG-5. Juliet Scott, 2019.

I am in many ways representative of the changes in the Institute of today. My background is in Fine Art and until I joined the Tavistock Institute my career had swunged from periods that were studio based to supporting myself through mostly unrelated jobs, giving me plenty of experience of organisations. My first job was in a hands on, vegetarian restaurant in Avebury in Wiltshire, a more secluded Stonehenge. This was a self-organising kitchen where we all did everything from the washing up to cooking. My art subject matter was and is mainly Still Life, everyday objects and how they relate. In my current and recent art practice I have been working with projective testing cards from the archive that aimed to surface internal object relations with a particular emphasis on attitudes to other, dyads, triads and larger groups. Now through a social science lens and theoretical engagement I understand these objects themselves as

having everything to do with human relations. Previously I was split by societal conventions with my creative artistic self only existing outside the organisational space. The last 13 years have been a journey to integrate that 'split' and during which I've developed as a transdisciplinary organisational practitioner; consulting to organisations; directing educational programmes and in the leadership of the organisation - an aesthetic approach figural to my organisational work. A reference to Antonio Strati's work on organisational aesthetics here where explores groups working with tasks as largely aesthetic processes of the senses. Most recently I have formalised this work into an Art and Organisation stream and in the last months launched a new professional development programme, Deepening Creative Practice -a co-curated, co-designed programme weaving together the arts and social science.

'Document 1'

	Memorandum on Developments in Social Psychiatry and Psychology at the Tavistock Clinic, London	Febr 46.
✓ 1 (32)	Memorandum for Dr Alan Gregg on Proposed Developments in Social Psychiatry at the Tavistock Clinic, London.	Dec, 1945
✓ 2 (51)	Extracts from "Good Enough Report," Education Act" Health Service Bill."	June, 1946

Contents page of Document 1: proposal for funding to support the foundation of a 'new enterprise in social psychiatry'

That is little about who I am, a contemporary Tavistock practitioner who collaborates with a diversity of researchers and organisational consultants dealing with the problems of our time. Our current work amongst others supporting a social care organisation to change to a 'self-leadership' design; understanding stress in frontline NGOs; bringing Tavistock work to China - a simultaneously rewarding and torturous task. To tell the story of the Tavistock

Institute of Human Relations I will start with its founding document, Document 1, this was the proposal for funding to support the foundation of a 'new enterprise in social psychiatry' that would focus on seven different areas in order to meet certain urgent needs of the civil community at the time - 1945. Document 1 was the initial response of the wider Tavistock Community that had been operating under the name of the Tavistock Institute of Medical Psychology and through this proposal became a number of different entities. The Tavistock clinic - with its therapeutic focus; the Tavistock Institute for Marital Studies; and the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. The intentions that drove the Institute's purpose were the continuation of work on selection and guidance (transferring work with the military, War Officer Selection, into the civil field that happened with Unilever); industrial problems such as work relations and the paternalisation of industry; and what was defined as the study of cultural problems. This cultural purpose explicitly referred to the study of German Wehrmacht and defining the psychological differences between Germans and ourselves, the British, and between Nazis amidst worries around what would happen to German children. The other strands were a strong focus on application through the interplay of theory and practice and training.

This to give you the origins of the Institute's purpose. To me this is important in the consideration of why there was a need for the professionalisation of this kind work at the time it was formed and the theories and science drawn upon in understanding organisational forms. Winston Churchill was quite scathing of the approach Tavistock psychologists proposed to the selection of officers in the Second World War, which represented a fundamental shift from assumed leadership of the army by aristocrats to designing a more democratic selection. With this emerged the radical possibility that societal leadership was a quality inherent across the classes (no wonder he resisted such an idea!!). In fact he made attempts to derail the War Officer Selection Boards altogether. The emotional connections of the Institute's founding purpose to those working in the Institute today are undeniable for many of us - my grandfather and great grandfather were killed in the first and second world wars; the Institute's current CEO is an Israeli jew; European work and projects are at our heart. The beginnings important as a complexity science world view of organisations gives us that it is their starting conditions which define their patterns of interaction and how their culture emerges. Philip Rieff's take on the

therapeutic/psychoanalytical tradition at that time was that it was a replacement of faith as “offering release to the individual from the imposing or controlling mechanisms of society” and gives a meaning to the scientific endeavours of those early Tavistockians.

Part of the relevance to this research group and self organisation is the Institute’s continual evolution in this ‘mediatory’ role as a kind of check to those controlling forces and how questions of authority, autonomy, role, task and self organisation continue to be key to that work. We are continually evolving and today have a young and energetic workforce, who through the work with the archive have been learning how to stand on the shoulders of giants rather than be overshadowed by them who continue to be engaged with these questions albeit in different and evolving ways. Psychoanalysts, psychologists, political scientists, organisational development and change specialists, artists, poets, Alexander Technique practitioners, anthropologists capable of bridging these disciplines and integrating theoretical approaches.

Vitrine



Vitrine displaying early TIHR accounts from the archive at 70th Festival ‘Reimagining Human Relations in our Time’ - 2017

The ‘light of historical evidence’ from the title that I will draw upon comes from my work with the Institute’s archive. It has been programme of work that I have

been leading since 2012 with a focus on opening up the discourses that have hardened over time.

“The archive’, says Foucault, ‘is first the law of what can be said (in an organisation) and discourse becomes built up like coal seams; ossifying over time.”

This following extract from the archive blog summarises our approach as dynamic and developmental:

“The idea is that the archive becomes central to the institute’s way of thinking and reflecting – not simply a historical resource but also a touchstone for memory, an antidote to amnesia, and a way of re-engaging with the past to contemplate how the organisation works today.”

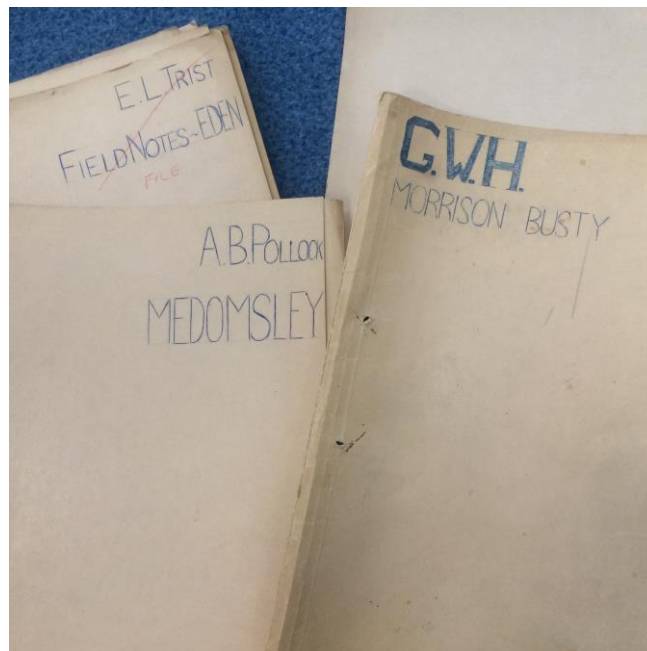
The archive contains records that document the Institute’s unique multi-disciplinary social science approach – group relations, action research, participation, democracy in organisations, organisational design, evaluation. The problems they were applied to are an extraordinary record of social change over the last 70 years and more. The documents and quality of the archive unique in that they offer deeply reflective commentaries and analyses – bringing together 20th century psychoanalytic thinking with more field based social science. The work to ‘open up’ the archive recognised these documents as having a wider relevance and prescience in the world that we live in today and was an organisational development experiment in its own working – taking an out loud approach; working with artists; running public events – participatory performances and social dreaming matrices which supported the transfer of material to the Wellcome Library and explicitly working with the emotional processes that were awakened in bringing it into the public domain.

We dealt with the archive not as a technical cataloguing exercise but as part of a wider and regulatory ecosystem, breathing new life into an organisation’s system; as opposed to viewing the archive as dead, inanimate and

inconsequential in the organisational ecology. We took this view through Gaia theory and viewed our work as to respect it as a potentially sustaining force.

In 2018 five papers were presented as a part of symposium on contemporary customisation of the Tavistock tradition using the archive as a lens through which to appraise, make sense of and customise current work from an evaluation of whole systems change in the textiles industry to the trans-disciplinary integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches in the Institute's work on wellbeing. The customisation that I explored with my colleague and partner on the project, Antonio Sama was in the finding of new consultancy identities and practices (as artists; curators; shamans; and historians of ideas for instance) through our organisational development work with and through the archive.

Coal Folders



Archive Ephemera - Social Scientists field notes and data from the different collieries. Origins of Socio Technical Systems.

David Armstrong refers to this quality in less prosaic and spiritual terms using the term 'ethical imagination' to sum up the Tavistock tradition. That is to say that Tavistock social science is the capacity to observe, notice, hypothesis what is happening as emerging phenomenon in the field, that social change happens not

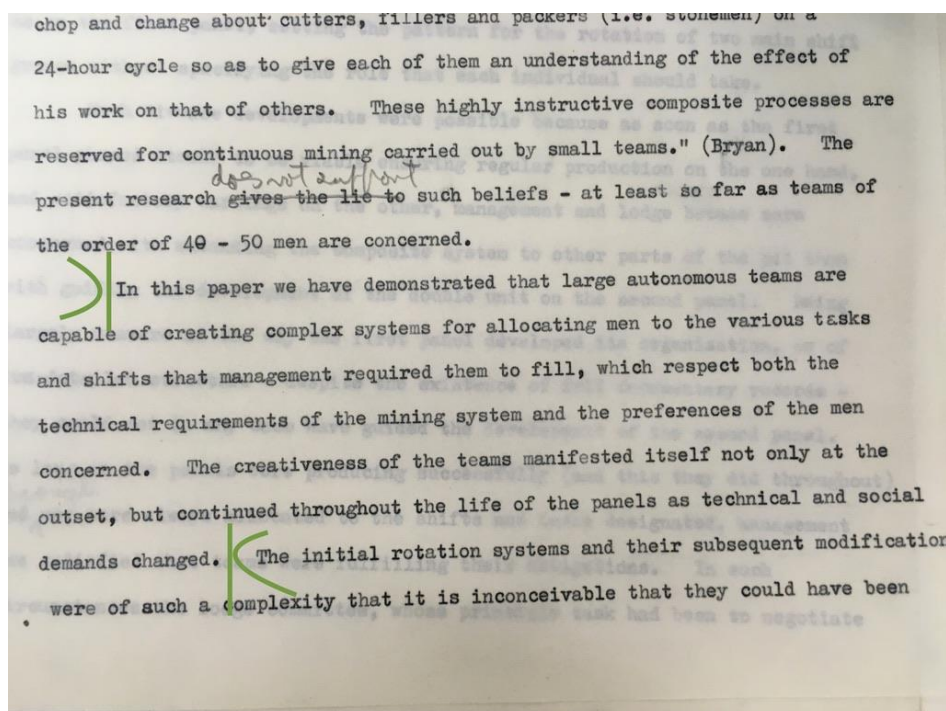
through top down making it happen actions but through understanding that given the optimum circumstances groups will organise themselves around a task - the minimal critical specification that is organisational design in socio technical systems thinking. In STS the minimum critical specification is about enabling factors for the group or organisation - too few rules and the possibilities are endless and anxiety increases and too many - creativity becomes limited or the organisation can seize up. The folders shown in the image are evidence of this observational work or practice of noticing - notes and data from different researchers on the different coal mines studied.

In my experience the work with the archive has become material testament to this witnessing and processing of organising as it has happened in the changing contexts of these times and shows how the methodologies have evolved also. Central to the approach and crucial to anyone working with organisations is the understanding of self - for many years it was a requirement of working at the Institute to be in psychoanalysis, meaning developing a profound awareness of 'what is mine and what is the group behaviour' and probably one reason why the group relations work was introduced to develop these capabilities for those working with and supporting change in organisations. It was critical to realise that the group or system could mobilise others as anti-task and therefore 'use of self' was about learning not to be utilised by the group so not to collude with power structures and instead how to work in service of the task and ultimately the wellbeing of the people in the organisation.

I have now described the granularity and potency of the archive both as catalyst to the contemporary organisation and as material evidence of a culture that has been working with self organisation or how groups, sub-systems and systems arrange themselves in service of an organisational task or purpose. I will now turn to the archive material itself. The material is now held at the library at the Wellcome Collection in London. Wellcome Trust is one of the largest funders of biomedical research in the UK, as well as supporting the public understanding of science, it has a growing interest in the medical humanities and hence its interest in the Institute's archive as a record that can shed light on the organisational factors in promoting better health.

To do this I am going to look at three sets of records held in the archive. Firstly a paper on 'Social Creativeness of Groups' from the Institute's work in coal mines; then A.K.Rice's notes from the design of the 1969 Leicester 'Group Relations' Conference; and lastly more recent work with the Norwegian shipping company Jepsens. The images shown are anecdotal from a recent research afternoon in the rare material room at the library and in showing them I aim to evoke the material, aesthetic quality, even potentiality as offering a further dimension to this paper. This has been an important element of my work with the archive - it is part of our current organisational processes. Last week's archive symposium surfaced questions of performance; obstacles; objects; use of self and cleansing as exciting trans disciplinary themes about human relations. Talking about it today is a further episode in the activation.

Social Creativeness (report summary)



Hugh Murray draft of paper 'Social Creativeness of Large Autonomous Groups'
SA/TH/B/2/3/3/4/3

The first material that I will bring into sight is the paper 'Social Creativity of Large Autonomous Groups' where what I find evident is that self organisation or in Tavistock language 'semi-autonomous working' is like the mining process itself hewn from the workers from a set of variables and circumstances. The report

derives from work for the coal board, an early action research project over an eight year span, with interruptions, in the 1950s.

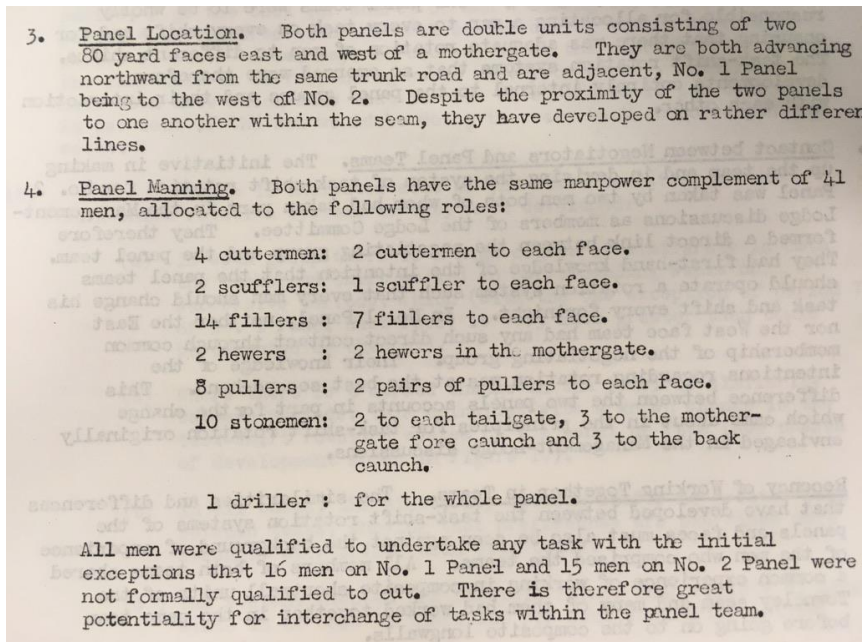
The authors write:

'The purpose of this report is to describe the systems by which two teams manning the First North Townley composite long wall panels of Chopwell Colliery have evolved for rotating among themselves the various tasks and shifts'.

The language is subtle but it is clear that the innovation is a quality from the people themselves 'the systems.....they have evolved". And furthermore in the report summary they say:

"In this paper we demonstrated that large autonomous teams are capable of creating complex systems for allocating men to the various tasks and shifts that management require them to fill, which respect both the technical requirements of the mining system and the preferences of the men concerned. The creativeness of the team manifested itself not only at the outset, but continued throughout the life of the panel as technical and social demands changed"

Social Creativeness (report detail)



Hugh Murray draft of paper 'Social Creativeness of Large Autonomous Work Groups'
SA/TH/B/2/3/3/4/3

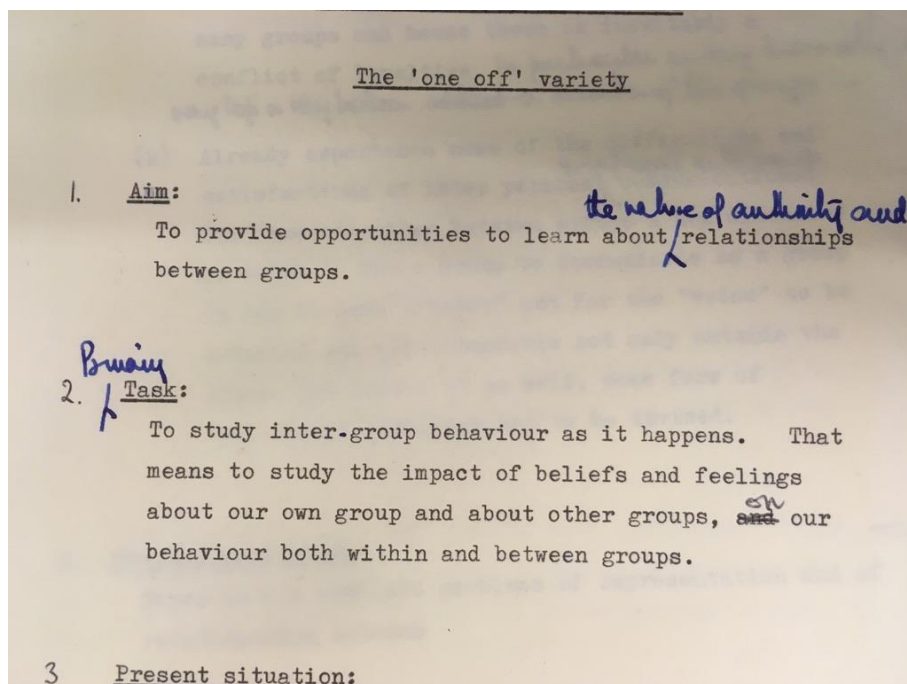
Time, task and territory are the structural factors governing or setting the rules here and from this the social responses of the workers evolve. The organisational 'change' is the introduction of new technologies and Tavistock researchers had embedded themselves within the workplace and were following the transition from conventional to composite working in longwall coal mining. Their key focus was on the interaction between people and technology. In this detail of the 'Social Creativeness' report we can see what emerged as optimal in the formation of the groups. The social, human elements are about diversity and flexibility of role among the team. Roles and skills (the social of socio technical) were specified with an additional qualification that, 'all men were qualified to undertake any task' with one or two exceptions.

This contribution to rebuilding industry post war continued with the Glacier Metal Project where the understanding of groups began to extend to a deeper understanding of the psychological factors that impacted their behaviour. Here the interaction between the psychological disciplines and the more field based ones began to show more explicitly. Elliot Jaques along with my personal Tavistock heroine (among a few admirable women represented in the archive) Isabel Menzies Lyth began to make organisational correlations with open

systems theory where 'organisation' is a social construction protecting us against our existential fears of death or put less strongly inutility to the group. Certain conditions expose individuals to this threat and when these are present defensive behaviours display themselves. Some of those conditions involved exposure to threatening tasks for example caring for the sick in health systems and what became known as social defences against anxiety. They are behaviours we know well - the patient left in the corridors in hospitals for example.

From this came organisational "working through" the addressing of how those intense feelings threaten relationships between people or groups of people, for example, between the players and the management. These might include rejection, damage, hurt, loss, weakness, pain, frustration, anger, rage, fear, disappointment, distress, let-down, betrayal, competitiveness, envy, shame and guilt. "Working through" happens when these feelings can be traced back and accepted, whatever their cause, and faced one by one, over and over again, to the point at which they are sufficiently depleted. The new relationships are characterised verbally as talking, dialogue, discussion, conversation, debate, argument, and so on.

Leicester Conference Intergroup 'Aims and Task'



A.K. Rice notes on 1969 Leicester Conference

This complexity of what was being observed in organisational systems; the specialist and finally nuanced skills of an action researcher was carried into what it meant to develop skills and capacity in 'human relations' as part of those original aims and purpose of the Tavistock Institute laid down in 'Document 1'. Initially this training had taken the form of the Institute supporting the trade unions in bringing these new approaches to training and industrial relations. Group work and exploration would have continued on from Wilfrid Bion's Northfield experiments and in the clinical environment. From 1957 onwards and up to the present day the Tavistock Institute has run the annual Leicester group relations conference as an experiential learning environment. It is two weeks long and its essence is the setting up of a temporary organisation in which participants can explore and learn about themselves and their interaction with a variety of groups and complexity of organisational interactions as the conference unfolds.

A piece of trivia that links with my interest in the interaction of arts with organisation is that the film 12 Angry Men was shown in 1957. It is a filmic exposition of authority, power and influence and its consequences. If you are unfamiliar with the film it is a courtroom drama about the dynamics that take place in a jury group as they deliberate about the fate of someone standing trial for murder and the particular power of an individual within that group.

We currently have archival students working with the Institute's Born Digital archive and one of them, Karen Kiss, has become particularly interested in the more recent records of the Leicester Conference, she is an anthropologist and her ethnographic observations noticed how the conference becomes a fractal of what is happening in the world. In its set-up as a temporary organisation this forms an aspect of what is studied - the relatedness of the organisation to its environment. Around the time of the Iraq war for example religious identity was a preoccupation. In her blog article she writes:

"they [the participants] still bring their reflections of outside occurrences, which often resurface in their interactions, attitudes [to conference staff] and even dreams".

My next fragments from the archive are from the conference director, A.K. Rice's preparatory notes on the design of the 1969 conference. The focus is on the Inter-Group event which is introduced about half way through the conference so that participants or members as they are known in Group Relations language start to experience more complex interactions between groups. Until this point they will have worked in small and large experiential groups and following the Inter-Group event they participate in the organisational event.

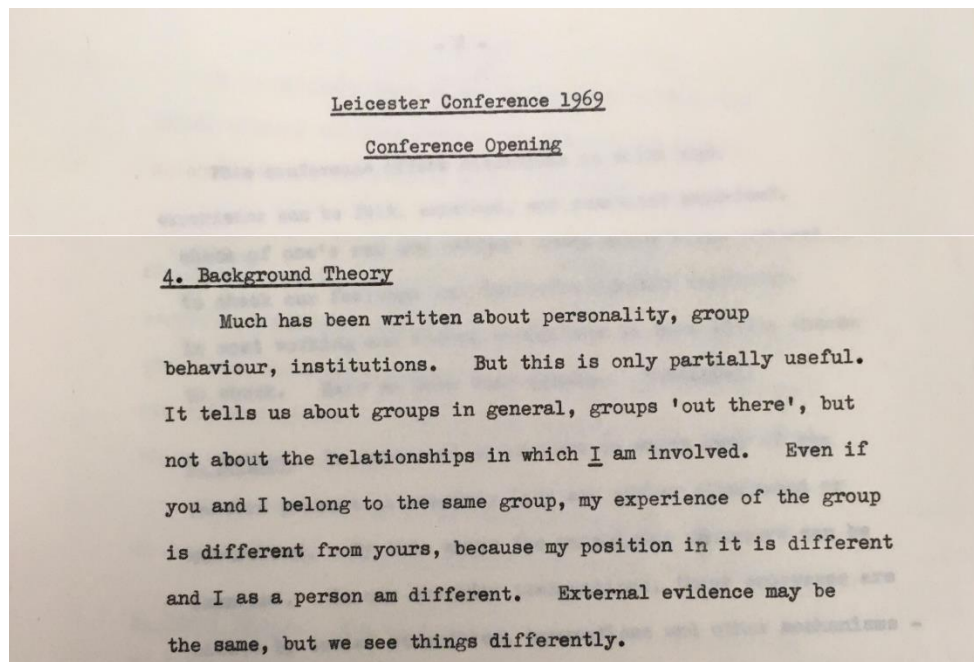
"The aim," he says, "to provide opportunities to learn about relations between groups." [and then inserting the qualitative description] "the nature of authority"

"The task" of the event [and then inserting] "primary" is "to study inter-group behaviour as it happens. That means to study the impact of beliefs and feelings about our own group and about other groups."

Another of the students has rued the demise of this kind of evidence of thought processes. In the Born Digital material editorial changes are almost impossible to follow in the multiple digital versions and the immediate editing that happens through word processing.

"The real issue." Rice notes is "Power and Authority"

Leicester Conference Director's Opening address



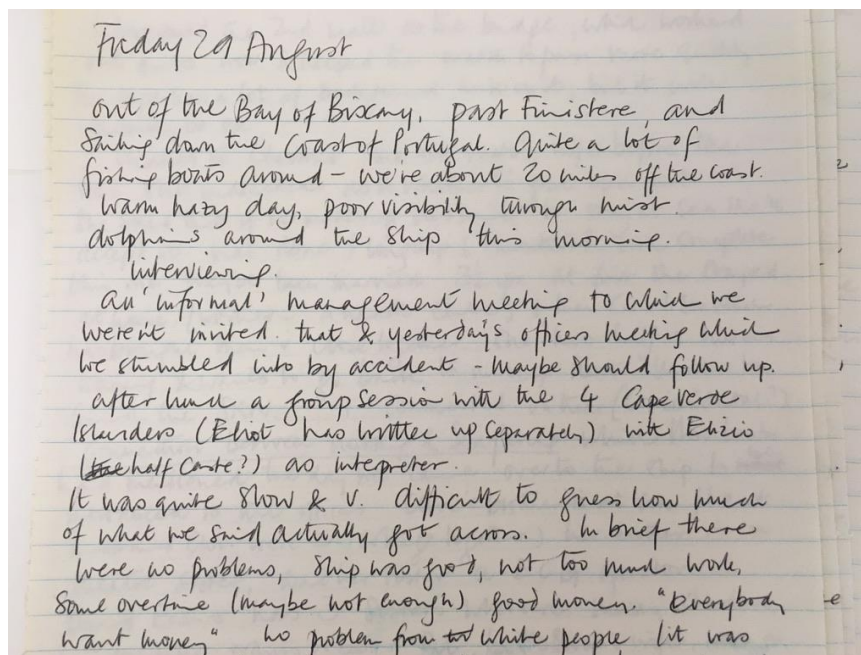
A.K. Rice 'Director's Opening' of 1969 Leicester Conference
SA/TIH/C/1/29

In the Leicester Conference the emphasis is on creating the container for the experiential learning of the social dynamics of organising. This is versus learning through theoretical texts and is a further example of how the founding purpose of the Tavistock Institute have been enacted. Rice's opening address to the members illustrates this and is an immediate and purposeful surfacing of the dynamics of groups and organisations and a justification of the methodology. No annotations on this as he offers the background theory or rationale on why it is important to learn about human relations in this way. His opening address says:

"Much has been written about personality, group behaviour, institutions. But this is only partially useful. It tells us about groups in general, groups 'out there', but not about the relationships in which I am involved. Even if you and I belong to the same group, my experience of the group is different from yours, because my position in it is different and I as a person am different. External [objective] evidence may be the same, but we see things differently."

This is the conundrum of working out who, how we can be in groups that has a complexity which often helps us in understanding the roles we take up or very often we are unconsciously given. Bion's work on groups and in particular his practical basic assumption theory was and remains central to Tavistock Group Relations work. The theory observed from his work with groups that groups form basic assumption or 'as if' behaviour either in service to or against the task - these basic assumptions include pairing; dependency (whose opposite is autonomy); fight/flight; me-ness; one-ness. The deeply difficult finding or learning for participants (particularly in the me-ness of today) is to understand the power of the group and how they are mobilised in its service.

Jebsens Field Notes



Friday 29 August

out of the Bay of Biscay, past Finistere, and sailing down the coast of Portugal. Quite a lot of fishing boats around - we're about 20 miles off the coast.

Warm hazy day, poor visibility through mist. Dolphins around the ship this morning.

Interviewing.

An 'informal' management meeting to which we weren't invited. That & yesterday's office meeting which we stumbled into by accident - maybe should follow up.

after lunch a group session with the 4 Cape Verde Islanders (Eliot has written up separately) with Elzio (~~the~~ half-Caste?) as interpreter.

It was quite slow & v. difficult to guess how much of what we said actually got across. In brief there were no problems, ship was good, not too much work. Some overtime (maybe not enough) good money. "Everybody want money" no problem from the white people. It was

Postcard expressing interest in the Surenes Experiment
SA/TH/B/2/52/3/12

My final archival evidence brings us closer to the present day to the 1970s with the Jebsens Programme of Change, which was an action research project representing a maelstrom of the evolution of Tavistock methodologies from the previous 30 odd years with what was a broadening social science influenced by thinkers such as Giddens; Goffman; Foucault and Laing; and a rapidly changing political and organisational context - such as a burgeoning feminism and changes in industry.

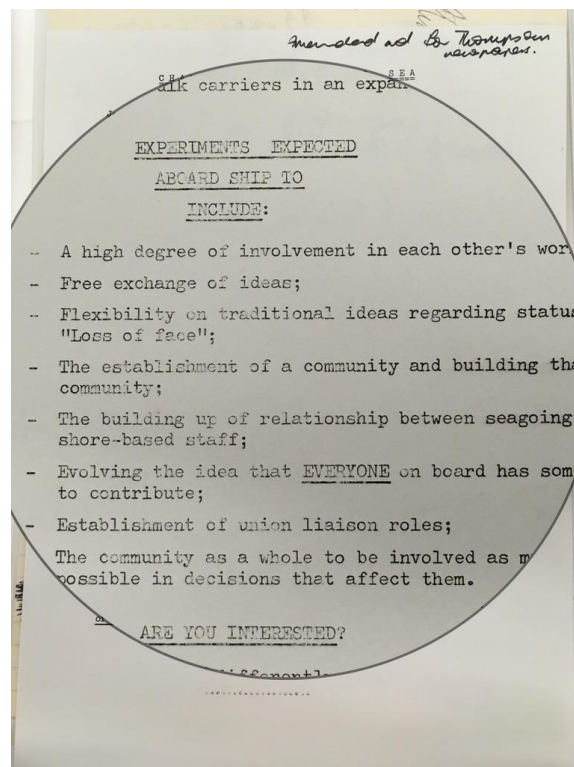
As well as the archive material my sense making of these pieces draws from a conversation about the project that took place at the 'In the Shadows and Light of the Archive' symposium at the Institute's 70th anniversary festival in 2017 (you can find this on YouTube) and is well worth a watch as part of this project. The conversation took place between Frances Abraham and Elliot Stern about their experience of joining the Institute in the 1970's and working on Jebsons as young researchers. They were young minds who were both sponges and critics to the Tavistock tradition; becoming witnesses to its unfolding differences, continuities and discontinuities; and willing to experiment with them. Action research in this setting started to stand for something much more participatory and 'from within'; change happening as process and co-shaping with an organisational system as opposed to what they saw as the rather technocratic or 'from without' approaches of socio technical systems. I am not sure I completely agree with their criticisms, I see a lot of similarity in the moments they saw as radical such the ship's cook being taken onto the bridge; with the multi skilled and role teams requisite of the coal mining.

In their world view management consultancy were dirty words and perceived as "expert roles in search of hierarchical influence". They espoused developing a far more participative or ethnographic approach to the redesign of the work environment - the layout of ships meant crew and officers were separated. As part of this immersion researchers working on the project wrote up endless field notes that in turn became 'working notes' that were fed back into the client. The modus operandi, politically and ideally in opposition to the management consultant was that in order to understand about shipping you had to go to sea. Before the project they undertook a number of voyages - to the Far East, South Africa, one researcher took the first voyage back through the reopened Suez Canal. This is an extract from one of the researchers' field notes that goes into seemingly mundane detail of life on board ship:

"Out of the Bay of Biscay, past Finisterre and sailing down the coast of Portugal. Quite a lot of fishing boats around - we're about 20 miles off the coast warm hazy day, poor visibility, through mist, dolphins around the ship this morning."

Another field note describes a seaman receiving news from his wife that she was leaving him, a common ship's tale and known as a "Dear George" moment that revealed much more than just heartache but the inherently insular nature of those who looked for life on board boats. From this granularity emerges pertinent information, you can see how this page of field notes leads from the mill pond of the Bay of Biscay to stumbling into a management team and a surface calmness in them that the note reminds the writer to explore.

Recruitment for the Surenes Experiment



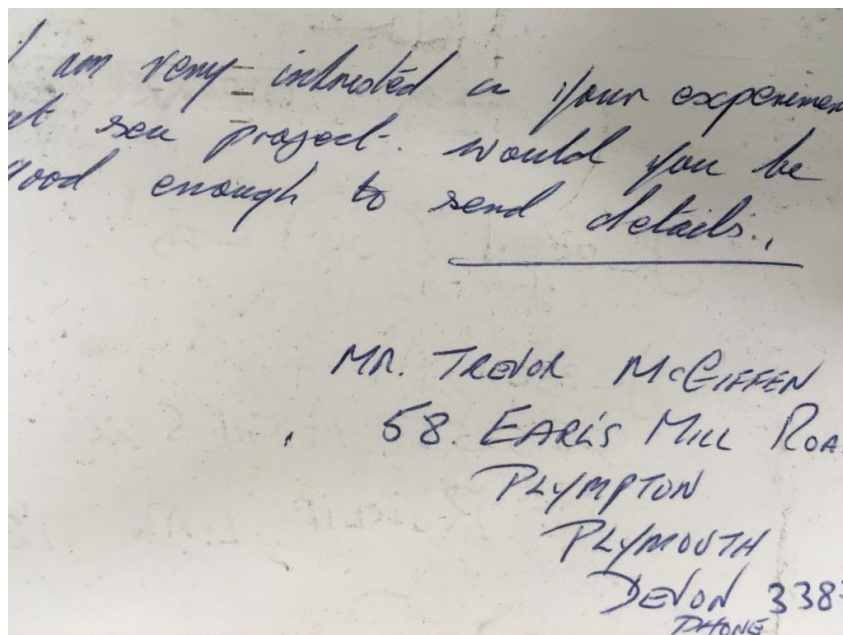
Recruitment advertisement draft for Surenes
SA/TH/B/2/52/3/12

I like the carefully nuanced title for the work, Jebsens was very precisely a 'programme of change' not a change programme or a project, there is an evolving, participative quality in this presentation of the words. Jebsens was commissioned by its HR Director whose work history was with the Norwegian Work Research Institute that had adopted early Tavistock work around democratisation of organisations and was a key part of what became the Quality of Working Life movement. The Jebsens' issues were of recruitment and retention and a rigidly classified on board system. One of the key actions in the

research was the Surenes Experiment which was a three day simulation/seminar, facilitated by Tavistock researchers, to establish how the ship was going to be run. This is the draft copy for an advertisement to recruit volunteers to the experiment with its strong emphasis on everyone.

"Evolving the idea that everyone onboard has something to contribute"

Postcard Response/Expression of Interest



Postcard expressing interest in the Surenes Experiment
SA/TH/B/2/52/3/12

And my final item from the archive *"I am very interested in your experiment"*. Handwritten and sent by postcard in response to a recruitment advertisement for both the seminar and to join the ships community. The seminars were filmed and the footage is available through the online catalogue. Watching them is to gain unique insight to the dynamics of emergent and self organisation. You might hold a cynicism that in being captured in this way the behaviour has been impacted but they are strangely intimate and immersive even in the way they have been filmed. Reality television way beyond their time!

Through these longitudinal explorations into the archive I am left asking if change wasn't effected through the management consultancy centric (masculine) approach how was it? A very different metaphor comes to mind

from Nan Shepherd's book *The Living Mountain* in which her interaction and discovery of the mountain is intimate and equal; not about conquering peaks but experiencing the flora and fauna; nestling in the moss; bathing in the water. This is what I see in all three of these fragments from the archive- the shipping project; the Leicester conference and the observations in the coal mines, immersive where authority is a property that emerges through action. This is perhaps akin to a perpetual process of diagnosis; conversation and feedback. Patricia Shaw's take on this from the complexity science centre at Hertfordshire University is that change only takes place through conversation. The maternal also evokes containment or the creation of an organisational holding environment, in my consultancy and educational experience the most difficult concept to teach as the holding environment is both abstract and real in the enabling of emergent and adaptive behaviour. I wonder if the MODE research is looking into similar concepts as structural enablers to self organisation.

And in the here and now of the MODE research project what final reflections might I bring today. This particular enquiry into the archive shows a surprising steadiness and consistency of a social science that has evolved over 70 years; bricoleur style bringing in new theories and approaches; new disciplines - me as artist. The values have determinedly remained the same of a deeply observational and simultaneously reflective stance; of working with context; of supporting organisational systems to be more democratic and most importantly to never shirk away from speaking to power. Today that is translated with a strategy to work along the continuum that is research based consultancy and consultancy based research.

Consistent with the overall ethos of the archive project I believe in the potency these fragments from the archive have to tell a powerful story about the social dynamics of self organising. I hope you have enjoyed them and that you might also take a further leap to consider that the archive or an organisation's history might also play a part in this question of working with self-management and organisation - through making history available for multiple interpretations and new meaning making. For me working with the archive has been about understanding the Institute's culture more profoundly through its "aesthetic 'patterns' of symbolic practices" as they have unfolded until the present day and

in serving its post war purpose; and it is about working responsibly with its part in that purpose.

I finish with an excerpt from my own field notes working with the archive:

“Power and authority were clearly in this awakening of the archive and as I began to enquire further I turned to Derrida and his book Archive Fever where he reminds the reader of the origins of the archive in the Ark, as the beginning, the commencement and the place from which the order comes. Could I develop a hypothesis that the Institute’s own culture of enquiry into power and authority was unconsciously fighting with the notion or suggestion of being archived i.e. facing its original authority? I had certainly become confused about my role seeing myself (again from Derrida) as an Archon or guardian of the archive. The Archon derived from Greek and was a magisterial and official position who looked after the documents and in a sense defined their authority and meaning. I realised that to take on or up the role of an Archon would be the road to nowhere or the road to the material staying down by the river and I began to think of the role as more about curating, a weaving together of threads. In this case questions of authority become the work as the dialogue develops between the creator and the curator.”

Museums and archives then become not just preservation or conservation houses, but processes of working through at the organisational or societal level.

Thank you!