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## MY SUPERVISIONS. SOME PERSONAL REMARKS

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**supervision**  
**existential communication**  
**supervision ethics**

### Summary

**Objectives:** The subject of reflection is the supervision process. The intention of the article is not a clarification (Germ. *die Erklärung*) of the supervision process, but shedding light on (Germ. *die Aufklärung*) of its parties' situation: of the patient, the therapist and the supervisor. The questions about supervision ethics will be discussed, based on own experience.

**Methods:** The method of description is the existential analysis, of which we know from Karl Jaspers that it is an attempt to establish existential communication with the reality that we do not have direct access to.

**Results:** As the clarification of the supervision relation is always done in mutual space: the one who establishes communication is inevitably a party of it, the outcome of the investigation is at the same time as uncertain as certain, meaning: biased. It cannot be generalized, but it can be a subject for one's own, also biased, analysis.

**Conclusions:** In the light of the experiences presented in the article, supervision turns out to be a place of intersection of the comprehensible (closed) with the incomprehensible (open). As such, it does not only consist of knowledge of what is learnable. If it is supposed to serve the patient, who submits him — or herself to the care of the therapist and supervisor, it should arouse metaphysical desires, the longing for what there is, but not for us anymore, or not yet, or never. Exercises in imagination are one of the paths on which we can meet the incomprehensible that we are.

### 1. Starting point

There is a destination but no way there;

What we refer to as way is hesitation.

[1, p. 302]

Many months ago I was asked to „say something about supervision”<sup>1</sup>. This seemingly simple task – the author of the request did not precise his expectations, leaving me the freedom to choose the content – turned out to be difficult. To say something about supervision. Let whom say something? The supervisor of psychotherapy, or a therapist supervising his or her

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<sup>1</sup> The basis for the article are two papers that I presented: the first one – during a meeting of the so-called Working Group of Supervisors in Gliwice on March 18th, 2017; the other – during the III Conference of Supervisors in Bochnia on September 30-31, 2017. I would like to thank my listeners for the words of encouragement to write this publication.

therapies? Or maybe the one, who, being this and that, remains someone unknown to both of them? Is it possible to distinguish between them with precision? And if so, will speaking and writing not rub away the traces of those differences? Say something about supervision. Something, meaning what? For several minutes, several pages – that I know, but I do not know if I am able to fill them with speaking, writing about supervision. Maybe I can only afford to speak, write about my (*sic!*) supervisions, e.g. those I experience on my own and, so to say, my own way: „on my own account, in my own name, at my own responsibility” [2, p.57]. Does so little deserve to become something?

My supervisions: in spite of the years that have passed, they still seem strangely short to me. As if therapeutic and supervisory experience was not subject to the rules of arithmetic: as if it did not sum up, generalize, make laws. As if I was still at the beginning and was starting anew; once again, for the first time, never with the fluency of the one who knows. Never with the diligence of someone who reaches his destination in the dark, knowing the way.

In the starting point of my reflection on supervision I do notice my partiality and insufficient experience. I am a party both to writing about supervision and a party of the process I am writing about. Furthermore, I am a limited party (my limitedness is unlimited), not to be able to recognize in myself someone who knows something, with certitude. What I am going to share I can give no other name but personal remarks. Writing, I allow myself for those crumbles.

## 2. Pretext

A question is asked by the unknowing  
 Who does not even know the reason  
 For asking so.  
 [2, p. 61]

I shall begin with a memory, seemingly far from our subject. Let us imagine: we get on a train, we find a compartment with free seats. We enter and we take a seat. Opposite, two women are sitting. They do not know each other, we think, seeing the distance between them and that they are not looking at each other. They differ but are similar in a way. They both are eating: the one who is eating a croissant with ham, brushes off the crumbles after each bite; the other, eating a baguette, does the same, but only when she has eaten it all. Does it have sense to try to learn something about them based on how they brush off the crumbles?

How does such an essay differ from the others, when from the heard, seen, felt, we try to speak about the reality to which we do not have direct access. Words; images and afterimages, gestures and impressions; aren't they but crumbles of what each of us experiences, and our speech, a way to brush off the crumbles?<sup>2</sup>

Asking, I proceed to what I called “my supervisions” at the beginning. For a foreign eye, there are only two parties that take part in them: my supervisee and me. We sit opposite each other, we look at each other from time to time; when one of us is speaking, the other is listening. From time to time we share what each of us has heard; what they have experienced and seen. The space of our meeting is gradually being peopled with ourselves. „To every «here»

<sup>2</sup> More on that subject in: [3].

rolls the ball of «there» [4, p. 197], and every «now» is joined by «it has been» and «it might be».

Our “tête à tête” in a changing rhythm of time (either slow or fast) is being filled with those who contribute to us or who will complete us: the ones living in reality and the dreamed ones, the ones known to us and unknown although known to others; the ex and the present, if they will be. Is the one I was seeing for the first time the same one as weeks, months and years of supervision go by? Or, I shall ask differently, are they still themselves after several minutes of our encounter that gradually, with every moment, is being filled with impressions, thoughts, phantasies that surround each of us and capture with time, but is it right? The space of supervisory encounter: „traces on the water, disappearing with the ship passing by, so far, some foam, whirls” [5, p. 275], which way, who, with whom, where now and where to?

### 3. Open and closed spaces

the finiteness of the moment  
 the infinity  
 of being  
 all the same  
 [6, p.211]

I shall make a stop with the concept of the space of supervisory encounter. On the one hand, it is limited: we make appointments with our supervisees for a defined time, in a space separated from others by walls; we speak of psychotherapy process and not of, let's say, music that we both like. On the other hand, the space of our encounter, seemingly limited, is open: speaking to each other of the psychotherapy process, each of us is speaking from their side, of which we do not know where it begins and where it ends and if at all. It could be expressed with a metaphor: each of us is looking at the reality of the therapeutic relationship from their own observatory situated in a different point of time<sup>3</sup>. It does not have to be added that this point is flexible and that the view therefore is shaken, never clear, always mixed with its shadow; also flexible, dependent on the light incidence angle<sup>4</sup>. No wonder that each one of us sees it differently and none sees all. The therapeutic relationship is shared to its parties – the psychotherapist, the patient and the supervisee – only with its profile, which is literally partial and never commensurate with it. The profiles do not equal each other, and their imagined sum does not reflect the whole, as there is none, but is changing with every moment. Each profile reveals a certain aspect of the relationship and covers another at the same time. Sometimes one step, a slight turn to the left or to the right is enough to change what we are looking at: the eight, a sign of finiteness just a while ago, begins to mean infinity.

<sup>3</sup> I owe this metaphor to Milan Kundera [7].

<sup>4</sup> It is not by chance that I use the word „shadow”. Its meaning is both literal (everything that there is casts shadows) and not literal at the same time: the shadow is a trace of what there is, but not for us; of what is, because it acts, but it remains unseen. The psychoanalytical tradition gives this name to the unconscious (Ger. *Unbewusste*), identifying it with the infinite (Gr. *apeiron*); the older Platonic tradition – the world of Ideas; the even older – pre-Socratic one – the daimonion, the voice of gods, sounding in all places. Unheard-of?

Such a grimace of the face. Might be a question of the moment and last no longer than one. But understanding why it appeared on the face, why now, requires time; and the longer in time, the stronger certainty that we shall never leave this maze to the light of solid certainty. –

So to forget that „to every soul a different world belongs; for every soul is other soul a world beyond” [4, p. 197], so to forget that we are parties to things that are at all times for me („how could «beyond me» exist? There is no «beyond!»”<sup>5</sup>), is to „comprise life into genre illustrations”<sup>6</sup>: to put its abundance onto one (someone’s) dimension, its many sides to a side (one, someone’s), the open space to a negligible point in time.

Looking at the supervision process from the side of space in which it flows: open and closed at the same time, what can I say of my supervisions? What I am only able to, I will express in points for the impression of clarity.

#### 4. The contexts

But efficient practice may find a solid foundation only in the clearest cognition (...). The fact of principal meaning is that thanks to psychotherapy, experiencing its impact on the ill and to their reactions one can gain knowledge that would never be acquired in the course of just observation, without taking the risk of therapeutic essay. “We must act to achieve deeper knowledge”, as von Weizsäcker says.

[8, p. 387-388]

First of all and above all: the supervision to me is an encounter (*sic!*) of Znikomki [Nearunbeens]”, for which a poem of Bolesław Leśmian calls (in the year that commemorates him, I allow myself to use this metaphor). Each of the participants of the supervision: the supervisor, the supervisee, the patient, „wanders lively in a shadowy chaos of beings / with one eye blue and the other hazel, so rather / does not see the world the same way, but with each eye – differently / and does not know which of those worlds is the real one – exactly?” [8, p. 364].

How does it help me, however, to call the space of supervision meeting the space of Nearunbeens? Would uncertainty be not a consequence of this diagnosis, casting shadow on the way that we are supposed to pass with the supervisee, going into the patient’s direction?

The uncertainty, being the result of the critical reflection on our situation. If we were to see in it an adequate answer to the task assigned to us by supervision, shall we not say then that it, the uncertainty, protects (may protect) from “the harmfulness of psychological atmosphere” of which Jaspers wrote many years ago (time does not flow, time for me), that it endangers any form of psychotherapy (and, it has to be added, any supervision of psychotherapy), carrying the danger that “instead of showing the ways of helping in need, it may become a sort of religion, reminding the faith of gnostic sects from one and a half millennia ago. It may become a substitute of metaphysics and eroticism, faith and desire for power, the arena where such urges react that are not reined in by any scruples. Expressing seemingly elevated claims, it may in reality level and vulgarize the soul” [9, p. 42].

Acknowledging the negligibility of own point of view: being the function of time and space, gets rooted in the moment, which is not once and forever, always once, never by itself,

<sup>5</sup> Comp. [4, p. 197].

<sup>6</sup> This time I owe a word to Bolesław Leśmian [8].

always mixed with some „then” and „there”, so acknowledging that in spite of the years that have passed and the experiences gathered we are still „on the threshold” of what there is and only „out of the corner of the eye”, so inaccurately, and never all, do we see what is seen beyond us; so acknowledging that we the therapists and we the patients are but negligible points of time and space, the “withering beings” (as Jaspers wrote) „connected to other beings” [9, p. 399], so if not this, then what can protect our patients from the belief, destructive to all of us, that because of the profession that we practice we can see better, in a more complete, real way? “I try to say things” – says to us one of us, the Nearunbeens - „that fit to my experience as an analyst. The experience is something short. No experience of an analyst may usurp that it is based on the number of people sufficient to make generalizations” [10, p. 86]. Situations similar to each other? Similar patients „When I hear of a man from the street, polls, mass phenomena and the like, I always think of all the patients that I have seen on the couch in my office during the forty years of listening to them. None did in any smallest detail resemble another, they did not have the same phobia, the same fears, they spoke in a different way, they had different way of fearing that they would not understand. Who is the [statistical] human? Is it me? My concierge? The President of the Republic?” [11, p. 195-196]. Are we negligible, are we not?

Secondly – supervision takes place in space of which I know that it is closed and open at the same time. What is enclosed in it, appears to our senses and because of that may become a subject of science and technology; profiles of things add up to views on things that from the changeability of what is immersed in time, and therefore (literally) temporary (never once and forever, and only one time) try to extract a shape, resilient to time and withering. What is open in that space – does not appear to the senses: it remains unseen, unheard and unspoken and does not let itself be familiarized: submit to human will or introduction; because of that it cannot be the subject of science and technology; it can, on the one hand, become the source of what Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, on the eve of great catastrophe, called metaphysical feelings (it is only them, according to him, that may liberate a man from the prison of temporariness, that endangers him, to the open space of mystery), and what I prefer to call nostalgia; full of longing, yet painful, never complete, way of returning to oneself, or therapy<sup>7</sup>.

The space of supervision is full of remains of the past (we talk with our supervisees of what is already gone and not of what is to come). What is enclosed in it is a trace of the past: the past, leaving, has left a handful of imprints; hardly to be seen, they will not show the way to come back to the beginning. What is open in it still is, but not for us: not anymore, or not yet; maybe never. It is not the subject of perception, but it may become the source of nostalgia: longing and painful (because never to be satisfied) looking outside of what is enclosed in perception. *Nostos* and *algos*, so return and suffering. Supervision is marked by the one and the other.

Thirdly – if the task of supervision is to find ways leading to the patient who, just like us, lives in a space that is closed and open at the same time, so, if the task is to find the way to him real so that he can also find himself and continue on, but without us (moving on from the dead centre, dead end road that had led him to psychotherapy), then it should become a place

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<sup>7</sup> Let us recall the word “therapy” comes from the Greek word *therapeúein*, meaning taking care of, worshipping, finally curing. Taking care (worshipping, curing) assumes the presence of the one I am taking care of (whom I am looking after, whom I am worshipping, whom I am curing). The ones returning to themselves become the subjects of therapy, so of care and respect.

in which the science of closed spaces is completed with the knowledge of open space. The latter – I shall repeat once again – does not share itself with our senses, neither with intellectual cognition; looking for it, we have to dare to leave the senses and what the intellect introduces from itself on what it does not see, in the direction of what also is, but does not appear to the senses, and what we sometimes call the purpose, sometimes the meaning, daimonion, appeal or message, as Adam Zagajewski does with „slight exaggeration”, writing about poems that they are like human faces: „At the same time a thing that can be measured, described, catalogued, and an appeal. An appeal can be heard but it can be ignored – but it is difficult to be limited to measuring it with a meter. It is hard to measure the height of a flame with a school ruler” [12, p. 11].

So, I shall repeat, if supervision is to support the patient’s desire of returning to himself, it should be based on the knowledge of closed spaces, but not rely on it (only on it); in other words, it should arouse metaphysical feelings, the longing for what there is, but not for us anymore, or not yet, or never, because maybe only this way will it be equal to its calling of supporting the supervisee on the way of the patient returning to the real self.

How? This is the question to be developed elsewhere, here I will confine myself to drafting two complementary answers. One comes from the works left by Karl Jaspers, the other from works by Erich Fromm. So the first one, in his study dedicated to the essence and criticism of psychotherapy, poses a question: „what spiritual tradition, apart from constant gaining of practical experience, should be the base of psychotherapeutic studies”? [9, p. 434]. The answer that he suggests for our consideration is the following: „It is probable that psychotherapy will gain its possible importance only when it will draw knowledge not just from the works of psychotherapists of the last half century (...) but also from the deep sources of human knowledge. The adequate image of a human could be created by anthropology, breeding upon Greek philosophy, Augustine, Kierkegaard, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche (...). Only the greatest masters are allowed to specify the human image and shape the ways of speaking about the soul. They must teach others to deal with concepts with which a human is able to clarify himself” [9, p. 434-435]. Fromm, on the other hand, referring with criticism to methods of teaching analytical psychotherapy, said in 1974 to his students: „The training program for psychoanalysts should contain studies on history, history of religion, mythology, symbolism; or all the main domains of human mind’s activity. Instead, the official requirement today for the psychoanalyst are psychological studies and PhD in psychology. So I think – and I suppose that many psychologists will agree with me – that this is just a waste of time. They only do this because they are forced to, because otherwise they would not receive the degree accepted by the state; it is a condition to obtain the license of psychoanalyst (...). In academic psychology, taught at universities, practically nothing is being said of a human in the meaning in which psychoanalysis deals with a human, aiming at understanding his motivation and his problems (...). Maybe for psychoanalysis it is more useful to read Balzac than to read psychological literature. Reading Balzac is more helpful in understanding a person during the analysis, as Balzac was an artist who could describe the story of a case, but with what richness, what depth, really reaching the unconscious motivation of people, showing them in mutual relations with a social situation (...). If someone is really interested in a human and his unconsciousness, he shall not read the academic texts, he should read Balzac, Dostoyevsky, Kafka. From them he can learn something about humans, much more than from psychoanalytical literature (my books

included). With them, the whole richness of deep insight, or exactly what psychoanalysis should be doing, can be found; what it should do in reference to individuals" [13, p. 92-93]<sup>8</sup>.

If one should compare the two positions expressed a moment ago, then one will see that in spite of differences, each of them demands going beyond the limits set in their studies on humans by sciences and their methods; as if the art of practicing the therapist's profession could not rely on the same on what science, in its claims for truth, reduced, so frequently, to accuracy and reliability of presentations, states as irrefutable within the limits of its premises. Would the learning of the psychotherapist's profession – the learning for which the supervisors are also responsible – learning to get familiarized with what, being inaccessible to senses, remains incomprehensible although it is, because it means? Not only getting familiarized with, but also finding the secret connections between what is well-known (already seen): arranged in a sequel of predictable interdependencies; and what is different – the invisible to the eye and inaudible to the ear framework of everything that is comprehensible as such, and because of this default presence, develops sense; not literal, but, so to say, beyond literal.

Facts and senses. What seems random or irrelevant at a glance, at some different plan is connected by a secret bond, so they are tuned to one another, one is a symbol of the other, just like in a poem, the sense of which, like accompaniment, accompanies the sound of the words, or the other way round, in which the sound of the words "with an audible pace keeps up [with its sense], contrary to random compounds in non-artistic utterances" [15, p. 151-152].

Philosophy and art, because not only literature, try to express the secret bond connecting facts and their senses, the bond of which the knot is a human living in a world that is „beautiful and very different“, in a world – let us emphasize that – that is experienced (*Lebenswelt*), in relation to which "any scientific attribute is abstract, dependent and of a sign's nature, just like geography in reference to landscape that had taught us what is forest, meadow or river in the first place" [16, p. 80]. Can they become the lessons of our profession, thanks to which we shall learn, from the beginning to the beginning, understanding other people, other languages, other sufferings; and above all, the art of humility towards „the world so beautiful and very different" [17, p. 454-456]?

Fourthly – supporting supervisees in the leaving what is closed in the therapeutic space towards what is opening in it, may take the form of exercises in imagination; I shall call them this way. I would like to illustrate this thought with an example that I owe to the prose of Tomas Tranströmer, psychologist and Nobel Prize winner in literature: "I carry within me" – he wrote – "my earlier faces, like the rings of a tree. And the sum of all of them is myself. The mirror can see only my last face, I can feel all the previous ones" [18, p. 444)]. Exercises in imagination that I offer to my supervisees during our meetings are an encouragement to imagine all the rest based on the fragment that seems to us (seen, heard, felt, thought, said, dreamt). It is not to speak about the patient: what he is like and why and what for. It is to imagine the life that hides behind what is at show today; to be able to speak to the patient, and not just about him. I could quote here many examples from my supervisory practice, but this is not the place to do that. I shall recall just one story, experienced lately.

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<sup>8</sup> To the reflection upon this proposition, as well as other ones that correspond with it, a fragment of my „Genealogies of psychotherapy" is dedicated. I refer those interested to the chapter „*Each beginning is invisible – point of view, or the starting point of psychotherapy*" [14, p. 164-175].

### 5. Examples

„A human that has become an object can be cured with the application of technology, care, art, a human in himself can become himself only in a community in which he shares his fate with others.”  
[9, p. 398]

A therapist does not know how to help a middle-aged patient<sup>9</sup>. He came to see her three years after the death of his wife, of which he says that “she is the whole life to him”. They met during their school years, got married at the beginning of university studies. Soon after that his wife got pregnant. Then it turned out that one of her inner organs does not work appropriately. Mother and the child were in danger of death. (Also to her husband as she was the whole life to him?). Today their son is thirty. Since he was ten (says the father, today the patient) he avoids looking into mirrors and other surfaces that could reflect his silhouette. He also avoids the day, going out only at night. When the son was born, his mother and father were busy with rescuing their life. After eight years of waiting for transplantation, they lived to the operation. The following years meant monthly control visits at a hospital, the necessity of remembering to take medicines every day and following a restrictive diet. Death could meet them with every step they took. Therefore they could not forget about it. That day, when the wife (of the patient) felt unwell, they got on a car and went to the hospital, as usually in such situations. The results of the examination were “not to good”, the doctor decided to leave the woman at the hospital, and because they had not expected that, the husband went back to take some indispensable things from home: the dressing gown, pyjamas, slippers, tea mug, soap, toothbrush; something to read. On the way from the hospital to home, or from home to the hospital (all the same) died the one who – says he today – is his whole life. Three years after that, he comes to therapy, saying that „he does not know what for”. He cannot imagine a life beyond all that he had and lost.

The therapist does not know what to do and how. After several meetings she notices that she has no patience for the patient; he irritates her because any time she speaks to him, he answers “it is not so”. He never looks at her. Hopeless, she explains to him the stages of the process of mourning. And then he covers his face and almost screaming, he says: “You cannot see me”. Or: “I do not want to say farewell to my wife”.

During his last session he spoke of his dream. He often dreams of his wife, but never the way he dreamt of her the last night: she came to him and she had a painting tattooed on her body; he cannot remember what painting it was, maybe he did not even see it, because when he saw her body he immediately hit her in her face: twice. And then he woke up. „I asked the patient” – tells me the supervisee – „if he had ever got angry with his wife. He did not hear the question and when I repeated it, he asked me what am I suggesting. I stopped because I felt the irritation known to me from before: again, he rejects what I am giving to him. After a moment I spoke again, saying that maybe only now, after his wife’s death, has he the courage to approach some feelings, experienced before, but impossible to go through. He reacted as usually: hid his face in his hands and told me that I have no idea what he is going through”.

The therapist does not know „how to work with the patient”. His resistance (this is how she interprets the patient’s behaviour) evokes her anger or helplessness. She asks me “what is

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<sup>9</sup> The story of the patient has been modified to cover the tracks that could lead to the one whom it is about.

she to do". Luckily, I do not know. Maybe that is why we are able to begin imagining together the world of the patient, of which he speaks to us „it is not so", „you cannot see me" and which he shows to us with his face, dropped and hid in his hands?

Listening to the story of the life of the patient and his closest ones: the wife and the son, I try with my supervisee to imagine the world that is not directly accessible to us. What is closed up in this world may become open, if we give it time. Literally: if we breathe the future to the past. What future is it about? Whose? The ones who have survived? The future of the father and the son?

We are trying to imagine the situation of the surviving ones.

The son – when the mother was alive, the child could see the death with which the parents were fighting. Death was looking into their eyes, so looking into them, also it, the child, must have been seeing it. When he grew up and did not have to look into their eyes anymore, anytime when he saw his reflection in the mirror, he would turn his eyes away. Was he frightened by what he saw? What did he see and did not want to see? Did he see himself reflecting in the eyes of the father and the mother? Their eyes. In them, there was life that has to keep an eye on death. When he looked into the mirror, he saw the eyes of mother and father, for whom death was the pupil of the eye, but what about him?

The father. Since he buried his wife, he „cannot live without her". He says that “she is everything to him” and that “he does not want to say farewell to her”. To say farewell, is it to see, life beyond her? The son, who cannot bear the reflection in the mirror, because he keeps seeing in them the eyes of the mother and father for whom the pupil of the eye was death and not himself? What would happen if he saw the son today? Would he not cover his face, breaking out in tears? Would he not burn with anger to see what confronts him with the fact that there is life beyond his wife? Would he not try to break the image, just like in the dream, not being able to see the wife bringing him on his body signs of life beyond him?

## 6. Exercises in imagination

The space of the supervision, closed in the starting point, limited from the side of the therapist and of the supervisor with the knowledge of what has happened and what there is, what has been (seen, heard, felt, thought), becomes open with a question directed to the supervisor: „how should I work with the patient?", „what should I do?". If the supervisor does not close what opens in front of him with answers like: “work (with him) in such and such way”, “do this (and not that)", but on the contrary, opens it broadly with his “I do not know” then what seems closed in the starting point may open on time. Literally, when we say that something came just in time, or when, thinking of the future to come, we say „time for us". The one („just in time)" and the other („time for us") enters the space of supervision from the side unknown to its participants. It could be called the space of a secret –then we shall say that it is able to evoke metaphysical feelings in us. We may limit ourselves to a conclusion that it is unaccomplished; we then shall say that as such it opens in all directions (Fr. *sens*) possibilities.

On the wall of one of my supervisees' office there is a photograph (I shall again use an example). In the foreground – an old, stone wall. An irregular opening broken in it – like a window, looking through which, one can see the sea. The wall, I think, can be built, can be knocked down, can be broken through. But the sea cannot be made. The unaccomplished is incomprehensible.

Between the accomplished and unaccomplished, paths of imagination stretch. The supervision tries them whenever its participants, starting with what is closed behind some wall (this one, or another, all the same), direct themselves towards the open space of what there maybe is but impossible to comprehend. Let us show this direction with the word “tomorrow” and then supervision will turn out capable of giving time for what in the starting point seemed to have no future (closed and without perspectives), could return to it. From here (*walls surround us from everywhere*) to the future (*so each sign left by you is a secret* [6, p. 164]). The way backwards, not illuminated by the unaccomplished, is a dead end road.

### 7. The ethics of supervision

What a psychiatrist ([psychologist, therapist]) using psychotherapy can be in our era, cannot be introduced adequately in the form of a doctrine. He is by necessity a philosopher, regardless of being aware of that or not, whether he philosophizes in a disciplined or random way, seriously or not seriously, whether he is driven by what is unconditional or the desire to adapt to social situation. What he is like – this can only be described by means of an example, not doctrine. The art of therapeutic action, dealing with the sick, the form of gestures and the approach cannot be grasped into rules. It is impossible to foresee how the reason and humanitarianism, prudence and openness will manifest themselves in a given historical situation and what will their consequences be.  
[9, p. 41-411]

If I am looking at the supervision process from the side of the space in which it passes, the space – I shall repeat once again – both open and closed, then saying that in essence it is ethics, is everything that I can say of the ethics of my profession. Ethics, to remind Martin Heidegger’s interpretation of pre-Socratic’ works, particularly those of Heraclitus, before it appeared at Plato Academy with logics and physics as a teaching domain, meant an open space in which a human lives or stays. I shall tell more about the first meaning of ethics now, introducing a fragment of Heraclitus’s life, related by Aristotle and repeated after many centuries by Heidegger. – „Gods are also present here” – said Heraclitus to newcomers, hesitating whether to enter or to leave. He was standing by the bread oven, getting warm. He was cold. The men had probably been expecting to see the master deep in thought. Maybe they had wanted to see him thinking to then be able to relate what they would have seen. Yet, they saw him being cold by the bread oven. Disappointed with the plainness of the view they wanted to leave when they heard from the one who was getting warm: “Gods are also present here” [19, p. 117- 119]. Commenting upon this scene, Heidegger shall write: „«Also here», by the bread oven, in this plain place, where everything, every circumstance, every action and every thought are close and current, or familiar, «also here», in this familiar circle it is so that «the gods are present».” [19, p. 117]

Looking from this perspective, the ethics of a supervisor is proceeding in the place and by the means of the place where he or she meets the supervisee, and through him, also the patient entrusted to his care. This place might be the neighbourhood of a bread oven, nooks of the house, the workshop, ordinary nose-blowing, wiping off one’s tears, looking to the ground

or to the sky; speaking and being silent. In what seems ordinary (already seen), there is extraordinary; every closed can be open, and there, where gods have died, they are. So, I am repeating to myself, sharing with the reader: if I remember who our supervisory encounter is about, who and what, if my concern is for the patient to return to himself with the strength of his nostalgia thanks to therapy, then it is proper to me to own up to myself and to my supervisee: There is a destination but no way there: what we refer to as way is hesitation. We are looking for a way, we come across traces. We are able to shape stories from them. But we never know. Our profession is an obligation.

I shall finish by extracting from my memory (again) a dream. – The dead for a few years author of „The Savage Detectives” talked with me about life and literature: - „It is obvious that you cannot read me from point one to –n; the book has chapters, 1, 2, 3 and so on, but can you read from 1 to n? The book, just as life, is not read in a sequence. What follows, precedes, and what has been, will be. There is no order or rule in it. A sequence of numbers is but an ornament”.

Supervision, if does not oblige, does it change into the art of ornament?

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