COSTRUTTIVISMI

Rivista semestrale edita dalla
Associazione Italiana di Psicologia e Psicoterapia Costruttivista

REVIEW

The Wiley Handbook of Personal Construct Psychology

edited by David A. Winter and Nick Reed

London, Wiley-Blackwell, 2016, 545 pages

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New Horizons in Personal Construct Psychology: Rediscover the roots into the future

The book was published 61 years after the release of G. A. Kelly's two volumes work; 13 years after the release of the first *International Handbook of Personal Construct Psychology* edited by Fay Fransella (2003); nine years after the release of the comprehensive review on Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) developments made by Walker and Winter (2007). The curators grant their recognition to F. Fransella and D. Bannister not only through the initial dedication, but also by choosing to republish a chapter by Fransella which has the task of introducing the reader to the concept of personal construct. A task that resumes what Fransella and Bannister began in the '60s in the UK by disseminating PCP over the US territory through the establishment of the 'Kelly Club' — such a wide 'expansion' which to date has reached 12 different countries around the world.

The book consists of 38 original chapters divided into seven sections that cover PCP and its Philosophy, Methodology, Society and Culture, Clinical Applications, Educational Applications, Organizational Applications, and New Horizons.

The work is completed by a chapter, unpublished in English, written by Miller Mair who was another influential member of the 'Kelly Club', regrettably passed away in the last few years like also Don Bannister and more recently Fay Fransella.

In the preface, Rue L. Cromwell describes the places where Kelly spent his childhood and interweaves them with the familiar, personal, professional, and historical events that formed

the background to the drafting of the 1955 volumes. He defines Winter and Reed's *Handbook* as *user friendly*, suitable both to the PCP expert and to the newcomer. Surely, the opening of Fransella on "What Is a Personal Construct?" seems to be the gateway for novices, but his perspective on the theory is still challenging even for the most experienced. Those who start to take an interest in PCP have the opportunity to consult a summary of Kelly's theory and of its early elaborations in the appendix: a substantial outline adapted from Winter and Viney (2005) that can help them to familiarise themselves with the terminology.

Turning to the sections, we observed a recurrent structure: a first chapter written by experts in the field whose task is to introduce the topic of the section while also stressing the most recent developments. Set out below are the descriptions of specific aspects of each section.

Philosophy

The first section deals with "PCP and Philosophy" and it begins with a fictitious 'symposium' introduced by Bill Warren and Trevor Butt — who, unfortunately, is recently deceased. The authors' objective is to resume and expand the points made by Warren in 1998 about the links — whether implicit or explicit — between Kelly's thought, more specifically PCP, and the philosophical trends concomitant to the development of the theory, also mentioning those trends known as 'continental'. Among the former emerges James, Dewey, and Mead's pragmatism, while among those referred to the European culture that spans from the 18th to the 20th century the authors mention phenomenology, existentialism, and hermeneutics — from which Kelly explicitly distanced himself, although maybe not knowing them that thoroughly (Armezzani & Chiari, 2014). The choice made by the curators to begin with the section about philosophy follows, in my view, the epistemological path chosen by Kelly by introducing his theory with the definition of *constructive alternativism*. It is apparent that for those who start approaching PCP, philosophy assumes a privileged position, I would say 'a gaze from above', as a worldview from which you can make sense of many of the things that are observed. This may seem paradoxical if you think that the inspiration suggested by pragmatism can tip the perspective of a theory that starts from the utility and its applicability to the clinical setting rather than the metaphysical reflections. What gives PCP such an innovative and distinctive character in the view of the other psychologies is precisely the fact that it is a practical theory that maintains a strict coherence with its epistemological assumptions.

Franz Epting deepens this epistemological path through the citation of a series of personal communications with Al Landfield — one of the closest and brightest students of Kelly — about the birth of the philosophical position of constructive alternativism by referring to the story of Kelly's life; one that spaces from childhood loneliness in western farms to the difficulties encountered in the academic social life, to the forced coexistence with a heart condition, and to his efforts to counter criticisms of his work as well as lack of economic recognition. According to Epting, this last passage of his life is marked by numerous 'threatening' experiences, such as war and the attempt to cope with it, mainly through the search of those alternatives to which he seem to have dedicated his life and his work: "I've been under threat all of my life" (p. 27); "Never get caught with your alternatives down" (p. 26).

Jonathan Raskin tackles the task of formalising what he calls *integrative constructivism*, namely a meta-framework that lets PCP maintain its own integrity as a theoretical unity, while also offering a set of shared premises that permit PCP's inclusion under a superordinate integrative constructivist banner. To do that, the author presents four premises that serve as anchors between certain key corollaries of PCP — namely the Individuality Corollary, the Choice

Corollary, the Sociality Corollary, and *constructive alternativism* — and key notions of radical constructivism, of the view according to which people are active meaning-makers, informationally closed as well as onthological and epistemological construers.

Raskin's intent is better understood in view of Warren's considerations. By stressing how susceptible PCP is — whether or not consciously — to philosophical topics such as free will, logic, ethics, the nature of knowledge, onthology, positivism, realism and philosophy of science, Warren describes a field vast enough to be likely to be read as confused, rather than as a rich basket from which one could grasp the prolific implications. According to the author, the application fields of PCP have so widened and deepened that the theory itself represents what Lakatos calls *progressive research programme*, for which new hypotheses and empirical data are generated whilst maintaining the theoretical hard core; namely, in this case, a personality theory and the reconstruing of a person's life. The use of the term 'person' places emphasis on a double meaning which, according to Warren, characterizes all PCP: on the one hand there is the individual perspective, and on the other the people there is mankind, "mankind rather than collections of men" (Kelly, 1955, p. 4).

In the last chapter of the section, Gabriele Chiari illustrates in a rigorous manner how Personal Construct Theory (PCT) can be effectively related to Maturana's Autopoiesis Theory (AT); an encounter that suggests interesting avenues to be explored. The first contact point that ensures epistemological coherence is the sharing of those assumptions that cover the relation between knowledge and reality. In both *constructive alternativism* and *onthology of observing*, reality can not be known directly or independently from the observer. Chiari's invitation, then, approaches a particularly suggestive analysis that frames the similarity between *construing of events* (PCT) and *operations of distinction* (AT). The reflection deepens up to consider *relational emergence* and *development of self*, in which the two theories seem to show both similarities and possible ideas to cover each other's 'shortcomings', not through an integration but through an invitation of 'revision' as conceived in the reference theory. An example of this possibility is described by Chiari when comparing the *core role construct* in terms of *organization*; this re-reading is extended to cover Kelly's professional constructs, including *transitions*, which are described in terms of processes related to endangerment/disintegration of the organization of self and its conservation/restoration processes.

In my opinion, the philosophical section of the manual provides a wide view on the issues that are now at the heart of the elaboration of PCT. A very comprehensive example of that is showed in the following sections.

Methodology

The "Methodology" section begins with a review by Richard Bell concerning the 'tools' of scientific research. Since the drafting of Kelly's (1955) book "The clinical setting", these tools have represented the initial — and for a long time the only — means of dissemination of PCT. The review includes indeed the repertory grid, the dependency grid, the implication grid, and the resistance-to-change grid. In addition, there are qualitative tools such as self-characterization, characterization of others, *laddering*, and finally the *Personal Construct Inventory*.

In the next chapter Peter Caputi provides a reading of the tools described by Bell in a perspective that emphasizes the analysis of the processes of construing rather than the description of the constructs and their verbal labels. Starting from Hinkle's (1965) ideas of bipolar implication relations 'if-then-but-not', Caputi focuses on the Organization Corollary by stressing the

evaluation of hierarchical relationships among constructs. Moreover, he distinguishes the evaluation methods of hierarchical relations on the basis of whether to use or not the grids. Both methods investigate certain aspects of data analysis that could lead to 'implicative relations': namely, asymmetry, reflexivity and transitivity, and resistance to change.

Conversely, Heckmann and Bell's chapter focuses on the technical aspects of grids' data analysis, distinguishing the results by elements rather than by constructs. These authors express doubts about the choice among different types of data analysis that are especially significant both for researchers and clinicians. The subsequent descriptions of *Linear Mixed Mode* and *Multigrid One* software are, in fact, particularly useful to both of them, acting like a "user manual" of the software.

Beverly M. Walker shifts the focus of psychological investigation into the non-verbal methods used by various authors to explore those discriminations that words can not express. In this chapter, Walker illustrates the creativity of the investigation methods that involve the use of objects, images, photos, and drawings through which people can achieve different viable ways to communicate their own constructs. The theoretical framework of the PCT does not provide for these methods to be more reliable ways of access than those that make use of verbal components; in that respect, people are considered to be active creators of their own interpretations in any form are communicated.

The last chapter of the methodology section presents the Experience Cycle Methodology (ECM), developed by G. Oades and F. Patterson. This method is illustrated through the application that the authors conducted on a group of adolescents who are living with selective mutism. The authors emphasise the qualitative nature of this method designed to investigate psychological reconstruing processes of personal meanings that is possible to observe by processing the grid of the interview provided by ECM, moreover, to evaluate the 'pros and cons' of symptoms, ECM is integrated with the ABC technique developed by Tschudi (1977).

Society and culture

The third section on "Society and Culture" is introduced by Harry Procter's chapter, in which he presents an up-to-date review of the literature concerning the compatibility of PCP with sociological theory and, thus, the dialectic relationship between cultural constraints and personal freedom. In Procter's view, culture has a prominent role in delivering a range of constructs that people reread through their own perspective, thus providing them a superordinate structure. This structure is what Tajfel and Turner (1979) defined as 'social identity', which regulates the relations within the groups and simultaneously with the members of other groups and societies. To deal with in detail the relationship between 'individual' and 'society' the author presents a set of studies on the use of *core* versus *peripheral* constructs. Finally, Procter addresses the studies on *power* in opposition to *resistance* and on *alienation* as opposed to *solidarity* in order to exemplify social constructs that canalize human actions into an individual, an institutional, and an ideologic layer. In his conclusion, Procter reaffirms the applicability of PCP to social sciences by stating that:

> a construct is not just a distinction in an individual mind: its two poles constitute positions, created, sustained, and evolved in a continual dialogic negotiation and interaction between institutions, groups, and factions, as well as between individuals in relation. (p. 149)

On the same basis, Viv Burr, Trevor Butt and Massimo Giliberto stress the importance of culture in the process of people's personal meaning-making of experience, not from a deterministic view but in terms of defined limits within which personal meanings may vary. The authors propose a study in which the participants could reflect upon themselves and their national culture — Italian or English — through reciprocal confrontation. For the authors, this process of 'visibility' of self through the eyes of the other represents personal identity's driving force of both change and maintenance; a process which recalls Kelly's Sociality Corollary but starting from a cultural reflection. Comparison amongst cultures, according to the authors, it is possible if it is traced a higher-level construct in which cultural differences can achieve commonality with no risk of alienation, such as the dimension "human beings". Without such common aspect, risks of discrimination, exclusion, and lastly suppression become apparent.

Procter's examination, instead, explores what he calls *Relational Construct Psychology* by emphasising the shift from Sociality, as meant by Kelly, to Relationality, formalised by the author as an additional corollary:

> To the extent that a person can construe the relationships between the members
> of a group, he or she may take a part in a group process with them. (p. 172)

Such view enables the author to draw up different levels *of interpersonal construing* of experience. The levels that can not be reduced to each other are *monadic*, *dyadic*, and *triadic*. Proctor points out particularly useful applications of these levels in family and group contexts for clinical purposes, and through their use in qualitative grids for research purposes.

Dusan Stojnov draws the reader's attention on how 'meanings' that are specifically related to politics may be implicitly present in the formulation and development of PCP. Such analysis identifies significant issues in the ethics and social domains. The first is the *responsibility for action*, seen as equivalent to that signification or construing that offers the opportunity of coexistence and negotiation to enable an active choice between alternatives in the field, mainly because it contemplates the possibility of different visions and courses. The person who chooses actively is provided for by a libertarian political view, but is exposed to the dangers of guilt. The second 'political' aspect at issue is that PCP contemplates a society made of people who are in relation to each other, instead of people who fuse together like atoms so as to form society. Therefore, people are not conceived as "building blocks" of society nor as products of social phenomena; set on a 'decentered' dimension, others' interests coexist with the interests for themselves. Another aspect that Stojnov sees like a bridge between PCP and politics is that of a relativism which invites you to contextualize the attempt to understand your own and others' statements. The author then asserts that PCP has an intrinsic unifying — thus proactive — influence, unless it gets distracted by traditional 'enemies' such as behaviourism and orthodox psychoanalysis.

In conclusion to the section "Society and Culture" David Winter describes the application of PCP's perspective in the social context and in the treatment of psychological problems of the survivors of the civil war in Sierra Leone. The context described by Winter is so dramatic that it highlights to the reader the impact of PCP's perspective in seeking to propose a change that can be greeted by those who receive it by comprehending the meaning within their own construct system. The invitation of PCP in this context is intended to increase, through interviews, repertory grids and direct questions, the possibility of dilatation on the processes of socialization and construing of role relationships.

Clinical applications

Winter introduces also the fourth section called "Clinical Applications" by unfolding the roots on which PCP first germinated in the '30s, and developing it through the most recent elaborations. Once he finishes describing the object of the therapeutic intervention for PCP — the existence of a disorder — Winter lists and groups the clinician's professional instruments into different categories: the professional constructs. By highlighting the different implications, these descriptions are compared with traditional diagnostic approaches (i.e. DSM V) to psychological problems classified as 'psychiatric'. However, Winter also underlines the elaboration of the meaning 'disorder' within PCP, which is more and more frequently described as an attempt to 'arrest' a movement or imbalance, or as a decision of Non-validation (Walker, 2002). The attempt to avoid categorizing people in predefined diagnosis, like the psychiatric ones, does not preclude the application of PCP to those problems that can be described with the classical classification systems. Therefore, Winter realizes a sequence of clinical examples, in which different PCP authors have 'specialized' themselves and were therefore able to cover the majority of the nosographic diagnosis. In the introductive chapter, the author introduces a specific paragraph on elaborations within the psychotherapeutic field, which has gained throughout the years importance thanks to Kelly's first formulation. Winter enumerates various personal construct psychotherapies: cognitive, humanistic, systemic, narrative. Some of these 'models' are described in the following chapters after the section. This variety is handled in different ways: some authors head towards integration with other types of approaches, risking — in my opinion — to lose coherence with the fundamental assumptions. Others, on the other hand, head towards an elaboration of the fundamental assumptions, which also offers interesting practical implications. Winter's last reflection on the motivation of the reluctance to demonstrate the empirical efficacy of the therapeutic interventions based on PCP is particularly stimulating.

The following chapter is a Larry Leitner and Katherine J. Hayes's detailed study on EPCP's (*Experiential Personal Construct Psychology*) recent elaborations, in which they explore Kelly's concept of 'Integral Universe' (1955). The model considers pathological, people's struggle against the assumption of responsibility and against the attribution of significance towards the sentiment of deep connection between individuals and with the entire universe. This awareness implies that each thought, emotion, imagination, action, may have an influence on what people construe: the others, the environment and oneself; whereas the symptoms are considered as 'disconnecting' messages or loss of ROLE (always in capital letters) relationships with others. The entire field that contemplate these assumptions of Leitner's model is very wide and put on the same level psychopathology and climate change: the negotiation between the needs of connecting and disconnecting with other in order to protect oneself. The authors' reflections are particularly original and underline the ethical importance of human action, canalized by the way people see the world, which is symmetrically reflected by the way the world sees and treats those same people.

The following chapter written by Guillem Feixas gives a detailed explanation of the clinical model based on the definition of 'Dilemma', that is a conflict among *core constructs* which a person at a certain point of his or her life will have to deal with more or less awareness. For the author, dilemma is present even for the psychotherapist, "to promote change but, at the same time, respect the client's identity" (p. 233). Feixas describes how the assumption of a PCP perspective, specifically under the terms of the *Choice Corollary*, proposes an approach that moves its own focus from the resolution of the symptom to the resolution of the implicative dilemma, or to the reconciliation of the core constructs in conflict. By describing the model on

how to treat dilemmas, the author and his collaborators, underline the possibility of using some PCP techniques — such as the already mentioned ABC technique, the repertory grids, etc. — to highlight the importance of the client's personal experience in the resolution of dilemma, in spite of a potentially threatening therapeutic prescription.

The subject of the therapeutic relation is quite relevant also in the following chapter written by Gabriele Chiari on the narrative hermeneutic approach, who, since 1996, is the author of its definition and its theoretical elaboration together with M. Laura Nuzzo. By following Miller Mair's narrative implications of PCP, Chiari proposes a vision that expands its epistemological point of view towards Husserl's phenomenology and Gadamer and Ricœur's hermeneutics. This expansion enables Chiari to underline those PCP aspects that allow the therapist to favour, through the construing of an "authentic conversation", the availability for conversation and then the research of alternative narratives that transcend from the decision of non-validation of a client, who seeks psychotherapeutically help. This process passes through what Chiari defines as a continuous, recursive and co-constructive research of the meaning and of the problem. The conversation is therefore directed to the person who introduces the problem; finally, the therapeutic pair allows itself to elaborate the core role of the client. In this process Chiari proposes the reading of some constructs of the clients' narrations, in light of the fact that Ricœur's concept of recognition of narrative identity, the author suggests what he calls *forms of incomplete recognition*. These forms, or professional hypothesis with an elevate commonality, are formulated based on the trajectories or path of development that start from early dependency relations (Chiari et al., 1994). He describes two of the relations: those characterized by threat and those characterized by guilt.

The last clinical elaboration of PCP is described by Robert A. Neimeyer with the reconstruing of meaning in bereavement. In order to explain this process, the author starts from the description of identity as a narrative end, in which the presence of others allows the construing of life. Through this definition, Neimeyer considers bereavement as the loss of the possibility of significance, therefore a person suddenly falls into the search for new answers on what to do, who to be and on spiritual issues. The person who is suffering from a loss needs to see the possibility of accessing and reconstruing a relationship with the deceased. This possibility, according to various studies cited by the author, is also correlated to the possibility of 'creating meaning'. Based on this significant aspect, Neimeyer proposes strategies from the creation of meaning: research the sense of presence towards the needs of the client, defining the therapeutic scopes and relative procedure, including a wide spectrum of narrative, spiritual, expressive methods, based on scientific evidence.

Organizational applications

The fifth section of the manual covers the "Organizational Applications" and faces therefore the PCP development within the business and management area.

Nelarine Cornelius is in charge of introducing an overview of authors and studies in different application fields; coming to emphasise the potential of PCP in areas such as research methodology, leadership, global management, marketing, human resources management and social justice. Cornelius highlights the difficulty for PCP to gain ground inside business schools, in spite of the interesting prompts provided by the methodologies and the solidity of the theoretical system. However, in the field of organizational psychology, PCP survives thanks to the methodology, mainly represented by repertory grids and their widespread application.

Changes due to globalization seem to be a new chance for PCP to find its place beyond its clinical origins. Mary Frances' chapter describes an overview of Kelly's volumes in 1955, re-placing the terms 'therapy' and 'therapist' with 'consulting' and 'consultant' keeping the basic theoretical core of PCP. The basic features of PCP's theoretical system are considered by Frances as applicable in an alternative way; a creative, new and useful one, compared to the predominant view where organizations and groups are seen as objective entities meant to be studied, evaluated and re-set in order to be changed; like entities victim of their circumstances. In the PCP proposal, people part of organizations acquire an essential role in the light of the metaphor of man as scientist, as well as relations and meanings conferred by various members. In the consulting practice, the use of PCP leads the consultant to a review of the relationship with the client: the way the client considers the consulting, what role the consultant plays for the client, the way the consultant can facilitate a change. The conversational aspect is consid-ered to be the goal and at the same time the driving force for change also at an organizational level. Frances then tracks down the cornerstones of Kellian theory when describing procedures she uses in her organizational consulting: the fundamental postulate and the 11 corollaries, the transitions involved in the change process and the professional constructs. When reviewing the concept of 'results' of a consulting, in the light of PCP the author suggests that the chance to develop some skills and the vision of a continuous training characterise a meta-structural alter-native to the traditional way of performing this intervention.

The focus of Sean Brophy's chapter is set on the problem of dehumanization of healthcare organizations and the chance that a PCP-based method could be a possible solution. The author points out that an increase of healthcare costs corresponds to a growing demand of the same services. This complements the transformation of the services on a hierarchical level in order to replace the word 'patients' into that of 'consumers', precluding a sick person's normal tenden-cy to rely on a service provider that shares human values. Brophy suggests three steps to sup-port a human development process within business contexts: the elicitation of values, the op-portunity to communicate them, and the appropriation of the values within the organizational structure, starting from the staff. The author then exemplifies the application of the method through the three steps, in which he shows how to use many PCP techniques including ladder-ing, resistance-to-change grids and implication grids, with the purpose to develop values like compassion, believed to be particularly important.

The emphasis on Robert P. Wright's chapter moves from business' values to what the au-thor defines *organizational paradoxes*. With this term the author points out to processes that have lead organizations to success, and that turn out to be, at the same time, the ones that hin-der a further development. Wright states that the processes that facilitate the paradoxes are as-sociated to an attempt to simplify what in a development process becomes an extremely dis-tended field, where confusion related to such rising complexity grows. The chance to apply constructive alternativism in these contexts has significant implications, especially when over-coming the contrast of opposites and coming to their complementarity. Wright provides an ex-ample of how, through the use of the grids, it is possible to elicit and highlight the paradoxes, in order to support the creation of new alternatives.

Jelena Pavlović and Dusan Stojnov conclude the section about PCP in organizations through an in-depth analysis of coaching role and functions, in what they define a continuous training society (*Learning Society*). The authors then describe the relationship between psycho-therapy and coaching, identifying areas of overlap and mutual exclusion. The distinctive as-pects are described referring to different application fields, e.g. clinical vs professional, or compared to a focus on performances, where a contract with a client is mainly defined by goals. On my point of view, the most highlighted point is the process that characterises the coaching model according to the personal constructs perspective, and that is the summary of

the following steps: negotiating goals; exploring meaning in personal and organizational stories; facilitating elaborative conversations; experimentation; evaluation.

The authors conclude with an incremental perspective compared to the coaching role when providing answers to arising problems within the vicissitudes of a continuous learning society, in which the psychotherapist will be able to broaden his own skills in this direction.

Educational applications

The sixth section is about the application of PCP within educational contexts, and by going through Maureen Pope and Pam Denicolo's introduction chapter it is possible to realise how productive the alliance between constructivism and education can be. It is easy to imagine a radical change in educational practices with the assumption that the world's knowledge is mediated by an observer who acts as a scientist, who plans and verifies his own experiments. The authors, in agreement with Raskin's conclusions (see above), emphasise the fruitful interplay between constructive research traditions in educational contexts; like symbolic interactionism, social constructivism, pragmatism, phenomenology and radical constructivism. The authors present a review of researches in the science teaching field, in which they highlight the importance of an encounter between students' and teachers' perspectives as a start point for the development of their scientific theories. In the educational field, constructivist techniques used in different researches take inspiration by both the use of the grids and narrative facilities like self-characterization, which support the responsibilization of the actors involved through a reflection on the learning process in place.

In his chapter Martin Fromm specifies that the term 'learning', which Kelly carefully avoids, is synonymous with the construing of a continuous flow of events that people encounter during their lifetime. In educational contexts, this perspective tends to have a different connotation compared to the traditional approach, which expects learning to be an accumulation of 'right answers' that have to be first presented, then stored, and finally recalled within the right context. According to the author, the focus of learning within the theoretical framework of PCP is a construct of meanings that shifts the attention from the product towards the process involved. The same change of perspective, also, is operated by the author in relation to the term 'teaching'. In this step the author observes, with a critical eye, that for the ones who play a role within the theoretical framework of PCP, the term "constructivist learning environment" is often used, referring to a vague "nicer and better place" (p. 358) where directorial interventions are in short supply. The author tries then to define some key points on which a teaching method can be based with a more defined constructivist view; including the focus on the learner, the variety of individual learning styles, the necessity for teachers to play a role, a call for creativity (intended in terms of Kelly's C-P-C Cycle and Creativity Cycle).

In agreement with the other authors in the learning section, Vladimir Dzinović also emphasises the importance of creativity and reflexivity. This practice is considered as the willingness of people to face new scenarios on the basis of a review of their own experience. In this adventure that — citing Foucault's thought — the author sees as a leap into the unknown, the use of imagination and creativity that comes with it matches together learning and artistic production. It is interesting to notice how, in order to keep a creative aspect, it is necessary to suspend the validation/invalidation phase of someone's own constructs. Dzinović refers, in this case, to Walker's definition of Non-validation, which assumes a proactive dimension rather than a binding one in order to reconstrue the experience. To facilitate such processes, the author sug-

gests a moderate use of the loosening techniques for calling one's beliefs into question, to avoid the risk of an unproductive impasse.

Michael Kompf — who recently passed away — and Nicola Simmons emphasise anticipation, experience and thoughtfulness as fundamental elements during the whole lifetime. The authors then explain how LifeMapping™ as a method of exploration and elaboration of personal meanings related to ten critical events of one's personal and/or educational life.

The section ends with an interesting research, conducted by Barbara Strobachová and Miroslav Filip, about personal meanings involved in the phenomenon of early school leaving for Roma children related to their teachers. The authors illustrate the complementary use of two types of analysis: the constructivist one, that is the Perceiver-Element Grid (PEG), and the phenomenological one, that is the Meaning Constitution Analysis (MCA). The authors conclude that, from the constructivist point of view, school can be a common world where different signification processes intersect with the involved actors. The phenomenological perspective, instead, considers school as a shared life which is experienced and lived all together.

New horizons

The seventh section, "New Horizons", is introduced with Peter Cummins' chapter that explores interesting considerations about the future of PCP, previously addressed also by Neimeyer and Winter. The areas where PCP has found fertile ground are subject of Cummins' introduction and concern the academic field, the professional field, and contexts of people in education. The author's analysis focuses on the publication activity edited by these groups, an aspect that has an impact on the diffusion and therefore the survival of the theory. Cummins also complains about the lack of PCP formal organizations, as well as a better use of the Internet that could make the most out of its potential. Although the widespread diffusion in the clinical field and in psychotherapy, PCP could take advantage of online training programs (MOOCS Massive Open Online Courses and SPOC Small Private Online Courses), even though a better coordination of international resources would be necessary. Regarding the effective demonstrability of the treatments inspired by the PCP with evidence-based parameters, Cummins sees a possible solution to the issue of the irrelevance of PCP, brought up earlier by Neimeyer.

The author invites to support a diffusion that could be in line with the main, most innovative and common communicative standards; then, seven chapters emphasise the propositional nature of the PCP. For the sake of brevity, I will limit myself to list down authors and subject matters in this section, even though each of them deserve a dedicated publication.

By means of understanding, David A. Winter investigates the abyss of a murderer's perspective, of a killer, of a mass murderer and of the ones responsible of a genocide, trying to explore in such crimes an hostile attempt to make sense of his own world.

Starting with an interpretation according to the PCP constructs, e.g. the core construct, Carmen Dell'Aversano describes the social construing of the sexual experience; extending the investigation through the conversation analysis, Rosch's prototype theory, Sack's conversation analysis and Foucault's theory of sexuality. The author demonstrates how these different levels of analysis can be understood under a comprehensive frame, that she identifies in social constructivism.

Spencer A. McWilliams explores points of contact between Buddhism and PCP, highlighting the shared vision of impossibility for people to experience a reality *per se*, *a priori*. This shared vision also extends to the duality of every perceptual or interpretative phenomena in re-

lation to a continuous flow of experience, than could cause suffering when tried to be crystallized or reified. Both approaches advance a conscious re-appropriation of the ability to transcend the obvious and to accept interdependence with the universe, also through the practice of mindfulness. According to the author, buddhist psychology holds a purpose that is wider than that of human suffering of PCP, a scope that results in the search for liberation from one's perceptions.

Jörn W. Sheer and Viv Burr describe how a PCP-based approach can cast new light on the understanding of artistic creativity. Starting from Bannister's reflections on novel composition, the authors gradually deepen four topics: constructivist criticism, reflexivity, artistic identity and co-construing between the artist and the audience. In each of the four described themes, the authors propose some potential and fertile implications for study and artistic production.

Nick Reed goes in depth with how the fundamental postulate and the 11 corollaries can clarify some aspects of the English law, especially in a criminal sphere.

Finn Tschudi explores the PCP implications in the legal sphere, facing the topic of Restorative Justice. This original combination puts all the actors who attempt to resolve a conflict generated by a criminal act on the same level of dignity and responsibility. The author gives some examples in which he emphasises the importance of mutual recognition of differences and co-responsibilities of the actions, included the reparative ones. The possibility to facilitate role constructs of restorative justice is set by the author in opposition with the often hostile attempt to take a distance from the criminal experience, through means of punishment and constriction.

Nick Reed and Nadine Page describe an interesting application of the PCP in the behavioural study of people supporting the environment or not; specifically towards the reduction of energy consumption in order to reduce global warming and limit climate change.

The Manual ends with a report presented by Miller Mair in 1995 at the second italian congress on the PCP, in San Benedetto del Tronto, to which follows a first publication in Italian in the book edited by Gabriele Chiari and M. Laura Nuzzo, "Con gli occhi dell'altro" (1998). In this dissertation Mair articulates the aspects of understanding and calling into question, in a reflective and poetic way.

The manual, in my opinion, is a great 'tool' for who wants to familiarise with the PCP language and take his questions a little further in various fields, in which a psychological theory can be applied. This demonstrates, once again, that the view on the world and especially on people, tossed by George A. Kelly, enlightens some scenarios where exploration has just started.

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