The Use of Image in Conflict Resolution: Presentation of the Eλouroboros Model

El Uso de la Imagen en la Resolución de Conflictos: Presentación del Modelo Eλouroboros

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Abstract

The present paper discusses the importance of creative and visual methods of communication in conflict resolution. It is argued that through the use of photography in multicultural environments, the emergence of certain emotions and existential issues occur, which lead to new insights. The proposed model, named *Eλouroboros*, aims at resolving personal and interpersonal conflicts through the use of image. In this case we explore the potential of resolving interpersonal conflicts, through the creative processing of certain issues. The data produced is based on seven high schools visited, in the center of Athens, in Greece.

Keywords: visual communication, creativity, conflict resolution, photography, image

Resumen

En el presente trabajo se analiza la importancia de los métodos creativos y visuales de comunicación en la resolución de conflictos. Se argumenta que a través del uso de la fotografía en entornos multiculturales, la aparición de ciertas emociones y temas existenciales ocurre, lo que conduce a percepciones nuevas. El modelo propuesto, llamado *Eλouroboros*, tiene por objeto resolver los conflictos personales e interpersonales a través del uso de la imagen. En este caso exploramos el potencial de resolver conflictos interpersonales, a través del tratamiento creativo de ciertos temas. Los datos producidos para esta investigación, se basan en siete escuelas visitadas, en el centro de Atenas, Grecia.

Palabras clave: comunicación visual, creatividad, resolución de conflictos, fotografía, imagen

Introduction

The word 'conflict' was initially used by scientists like Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx, in order to depict the notion of a 'competitive struggle' (Deutsch, 2002: 308). However, there were early attempts by many scientists to address the constructive nature of a conflict through cooperation (Vallacher, Nowak & Coleman 2013). In this paper, we explore hypothetical and latent conflicts, which are presumed as a promising way of creation or a motive for connection.

Many times, in the process of conflict resolution a mediator is addressed, in order to resolve the conflict (Tidwell, 1998). According to Sherman (2003), however, the role of mediators has been overemphasized and, as he says, we must take into account that mediators are ordinary people and cannot remain completely neutral, independent or confident. Furthermore, they can affect the mood and the dynamics of the group (Sherman, 2003).

Following the above considerations, the objective of the present study is to, empirically, explore alternative ways for resolving conflicts, by using more creative and flexible methods, which can be adapted in regard to the needs of each occasion. Creativity has been widely used in psychotherapy in order to facilitate the therapeutic process (Case & Dalley, 2013). In art therapy, creative imprints of thoughts, feelings, and ideas can also lead to self-realization (Rubin, 1999). However, in this case, it is explored how the 'image' can play the role of a mediator, in conflict situations, which can lead to self-realization, outside of a therapeutic environment.

The choice to replace the mediator with the use of an image derives from two basic facts. First, from the power of the images that affect our everyday lives now more than ever (Grau & Veigl, 2013); and second, from the power of mental images that have been affecting the lives of indigenous people for thousands of years, through ceremonial visions (Tupper, 2002). In the first case, the image has a tendency to be exploited in order to affect people's views, whereas, in the second case, images are a vehicle to truth or healing (Beyer, 2009). This proposal is an attempt to theoretically bridge these two worlds, the modern and the traditional, through a common vessel: *the image*.

Finally, it is argued that, through the creative use of the image, individuals or groups should be able to settle their differences, relying more on their own effort, rather than solutions imposed to them by others, gaining their autonomy. This gives the opportunity to individuals who belong in a minority group to stand up for themselves and confront other individuals who are able, due to power relations, to manipulate conflict resolution procedures in favor to their interest (Deutsch, 2002).

Photography in Psychotherapy

Photography was first used as a therapeutic medium by Dr. Hugh Diamond in 1856. Unlike the diagnostic tests in which several images are presented to the patient in order to assess the psychological distress (Rorschach, TAT, etc.), photography is used by many psychiatrists and psychotherapists as a means of therapy (Walker, 1982).

The feelings that emerge when observing an image, are inevitable. The optical part of the brain is much more primitive, thereby a picture reaches the 'heart' of feelings much faster (Walker, 2002). The pictures help the person to relax and release any emotions that are oppressed and difficult to express. Using the photo as a pretext, the person begins to approach, discover and communicate feelings and memories that may have been buried for years and may address issues that require analysis or resolution (Weiser, 2008).

Judy Weiser, working with deaf and indigenous teenagers in the United States, describes, through her experience that both groups, although primarily dominant in the right hemisphere of the brain, were trying to adapt to the rules of a 'society of the left hemisphere'. It is very difficult for a child born with a dominant right hemisphere to live in a society dominated by the left (Weiser, 1983). Therefore, images are in favor to the people that are dominant in the right hemisphere of the brain, in any society.

Furthermore, during the engagement with one or more images, many clients are completely absorbed by the process (Walker, 1986). According to the words of Nuñez:

Our creative self has something divine, because when we create we have such a deep connection with ourselves that we can even anticipate the times and predict what will be and what human beings will need in the future. This should be the social role of the artist. (Nuñez, 2009: 56)

Analyzing the use of photography in therapy, we observe that photography acts as a stimulus, a tool that facilitates the process of storytelling and exaltation of the imagination of the customer (Walker, 1986). The process occurs primarily unconsciously and the content of the narrative emerges with the aid of the photograph (Wheeler, 2009). Finally, since photography has been used in psychotherapy and counseling, we suggest that it could also be used as a tool in conflict resolution.

Mental Images

Mental images are alternatively conscious and unconscious images generated by the human brain. Dreams, visions and meditation are the most well-known methods of observation of the images that usually come from intense fears or desires (Downey, 1999). In some cases these images interact with reality, in the form of the so-called 'visions'. For example, the chemist August Kekule, 'watching' a serpent in the fire, regurgitating its tail (ouroboros serpent), discovered the molecular structure of benzene.

Furthermore, Albert Einstein (1945), in a questionnaire concerning research methods, said that words and language, written or spoken, do not seem to play any role in the mechanism of thought, but those who serve as elements of thought are signs or images that can 'voluntarily' be reproduced and combined (Koestler, 1964). Both the voluntary and involuntary emergence of these images appears as a promoting development of a cognitive process, which can lead to the resolution of a problem.

The image as a symbol

A mental image is not only a mental representation but also 'the most primitive form of symbolic function' (Arieti, 1976: 37). Unlike language, mental imagery is a personal and subjective experience, which is constantly subject to change and therefore it is difficult to express in words (Arieti, 1976).

Koestler (1964) gives another dimension to the subject of thought, and indicates the existence of thinking with images. It is true that the importance of the images had been neglected by the rise of the Cartesian philosophy, but recently there have been several attempts to place serious inquiries and thus, there is an extensive amount of literature around this issue (Downey, 1999).

The symbolic teachings of Carl G. Jung

Jung claimed that many things are beyond the limits of our perception. Unlike Freud, who perceived the term 'symbol' as something already known which is not recognized consciously, Jung meant something relatively unknown which nevertheless is recognized or suspected to exist. This point was also the beginning of the end of the collaboration between the two men (Bennet, 2011).

The best source for understanding how Jung perceives the meaning of symbols is The Red Book (2009), which consists of a series of events based on the technique of active imagination and reveals the process of 'individuation', through mental images, experienced by Jung himself in those years.

One of the most important symbols in recounting his experiences is the serpent. Below we can see an excerpt from the book in order to understand the use of symbols, in the concept of the opposites.

> The struggle between doubt and desire was great in me. But suddenly I saw that I stood before a steep ridge in a wasteland. It is a dazzling bright day. I catch sight of the prophet high above me. His hand makes an averting movement, and I abandon my decision to climb up. I wait below, gazing upward. I look: to the right it is dark night; to the left it is bright day. The rock separates day and night. On the dark side lies a big black serpent, on the bright side a white serpent. They thrust their heads toward each other, eager for battle. Elijah stands on the heights above them. The serpents pounce on one another and a terrible wrestling ensures. The black

serpent seems to be stronger; the white serpent draws back. Great billows of dust rise from the place of struggle. But then I see: the black serpent pulls itself back again. The front part of his body has become white. Both serpents curl about themselves, one in light, the other in darkness. (Jung & Shamdasani, 2009: 251).

The interpretation of Jung, after this 'vision', concerns the conflict between light, which symbolizes love, and darkness, which symbolizes thought. The alleged conflict is one that will lead to completion. It is the conflict that exists within every human being, between the uniqueness of thought and the collectivity of love. This internal conflict according to Jung, is the source of all the other conflicts (Jung & Shamdasani). As he continues:

The serpent taught me the unconditional difference in essence between the two principles in me. If I look across from fore thinking to pleasure, I first see the deterrent, poisonous serpent. If I feel from pleasure across to fore thinking, likewise I feel first the cold cruel serpent. The serpent is the earthy essence of man of which he is not conscious. His character changes according to peoples and lands, since it is the mystery that flows to him from the nourishing earth - mother. [...] The way of life writhes like the serpent from right to left and from left to right, from thinking to pleasure and from pleasure to thinking. Thus the serpent is an adversary and a symbol of enmity, but also a wise bridge that connects right and left through longing, much needed by our life. (Jung & Shamdasani, 2009: 247).

The serpent is the bridge, which symbolizes the union of the basic contradictions in life, the alpha and the omega of creation (Jung & Shamdasani, 2009). Jung's preoccupation with alchemy resides from his interest in the mystery of the archetypal union between good and evil, male and female, light and darkness (Bennet, 2011). The purpose of all these is the individuation, i.e. the journey of a person towards the Self (Jung & Franz, 1964).

In a similar process, after research was conducted in five schools of Athens and bearing in mind the need for a structure in the process of creative conflict resolution, a mental image of a serpent emerged, intuitively, which moved upwards in a constant and never ending spiral. Three phases and five levels were placed on an axis, which followed a natural progression. Through the conscious exploration of a conflict resolution process and possibly in combination with many other processes that took place in the unconscious mind of the researcher, Eλouroboros, the model for creative conflict resolution was born.

Eλouroboros - A Model for Creative Conflict Resolution

The name 'Eλouroboros' derived from the Ouroboros, the serpent that perpetually eats its own tail. In contrast to the Ouroboros, this model suggests the overcoming of that circular movement, where the serpent moves towards the tail, and yet with a slight upward trend, forms a spiral form movement. That way, the vicious cycle that sustains stagnation is stopped. One of the characteristics of the spiral is infinity (Jung & Franz, 1964). The spiral suggests the evolution and perpetual and everlasting change (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996). Through this conscious experience the person 'acquires' the archetypal knowledge in order to deal with difficulties and conflicts in the future. The Eλ indicates light, as in the ancient Greek language, and the advent to a higher spiritual state. Each problem is considered a source of information and by switching the stimulus from conscious to unconscious and reverse, the Eλouroboros 'grounds' its ascending course from the microcosm to the macrocosm.

The purpose of the Eλouroboros is resolving interpersonal conflicts on an individual or group level. The person or group follows a specific procedure based on creativity and innovation. Freedom of expression and originality are encouraged to reinforce the element of creativity and confidence of individuals, while the concept of error does not exist in this process. Through the model both the conflict and the concept of conflict are being processed. The goal of this model is the perception and deep understanding of the concept of conflict, in order for the person or group to obtain the knowledge and capacity for management of future conflicts.

The environment in which the process takes place is rhizomatic (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). This means that it has the characteristics of a rhizome and every step is carried out within these features. Flexibility, connectivity and multiplicity are some of the principles of a rhizome. We can imagine that the Eλouroboros is located in an environment consisting of infinite small fine lines, like the neurons of the brain, suggesting infinite possibilities. Finally, it follows a natural progression rather than a forced or structured course since it is a variation of an older form of thought, which preexists in the unconscious mind (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). Once the groups or individuals agree to work on a certain conflict, the process begins and it consists of five levels, which are subject to three phases (Figure 1).

Phase A - Awareness

Phase A is the phase of awareness of the problem. This phase includes levels *a* and *b*. It represents the time that the person or group are invited to explore and focus on the problem through *creativity*.

Level a

At level *a*, the exploration of the problem occurs consciously and verbally. Through organization, the individual or group has to focus on the point he or she considers most important in the conflict, in order to communicate it. Like in brainstorming, in order to facilitate this procedure, pencils and papers can be used to draw out ideas.

Level b

At level *b*, the creative exploration of the problem begins, although it is not always done consciously. Through various creative means, such as drawing, photography, film making etc, individuals explore the problem by trying to represent it. Having reached in the previous level their desired point of focus, they are invited to represent it, creatively and non-verbally. Throughout the process, the problem and the focus point keeps being revised constantly and subconsciously. At this point the absence of the concept of error is crucial, so the focus point can be still changed. The *creative product* of this level is the key needed to introduce the next phase of the conflict resolution process.

Phase B - Communication

Phase B is the phase of communication of the problem and includes levels *c* and *d*. At this point, the *interaction* of conflicting sides is of particular importance in resolving the conflict.

Level c

At level *c*, the creative product, represented in this case by the photo, is being presented. All participants see the creative product and this is the first contact between the opposing sides. At this level, the information exchange takes place non-verbally, so as to give space to unconscious processes and thoughts to surface. The only 'action' the individual is called to perform is observation.

Level d

At level *d,* individuals or groups are invited to initiate a discussion. Returning to the use of verbal communication, the aim is to discuss the creative product. In this case, the analysis of photographs promotes the emergence of unconscious thoughts that sustain conflict and converts them into phrases, facilitating the communication process. Ideas about the conflict are expressed, carrying the personal touch of each individual. The discussion is open and free. Usually, the content of discussion moves from the creative product to the conflict itself. In this case, the conflict is discussed again after the creative process that preceded it. The conflict has been re-considered and discussed in the light of another visual aspect. Key to the next phase is *mutual awareness* of the 'real' problem.

Phase C - Evaluation

Phase C is the evaluation phase of the problem and corresponds to level *e* of the process. In fact level *e* does not assume the end, as the process of evolving is infinite, so the level could also be classified as level ∞ (infinite).

Level ∞

Level ∞ is the only level that cannot be presumed to happen; it might or might not occur. The approach should be done naturally and without constraints. The more freely the procedures take place in the previous levels, the more effortlessly individuals can reach this level. The harmonization

process of the structure of the model in a libertarian way is crucial in order to resolve the conflict.

Moreover, we can characterize this level as a state of mind or condition. This state of mind, which can be considered as altered, is equivalent to 'illumination', which occurs in many creative processes (Arieti, 1976). Mostly, an altered state of consciousness has been described as a change in the conscious experience or as a subjective feeling of that change, while others believe that it is 'an alteration in the informational or representational relationships between consciousness and the world' (Revonsuo, Kallio & Sikka, 2009: 187).

We propose that the characteristics of this condition facilitate conflict resolution, shedding light on the essence of the 'real' problem, in addition to a deeper understanding of the concept of conflict, in general. A reflection on the conflict takes place, helping the individual to acquire the skills that are needed for preventing or resolving conflict in the future.

Figure 1. *The Eλouroboros in action – Interacting with the other*
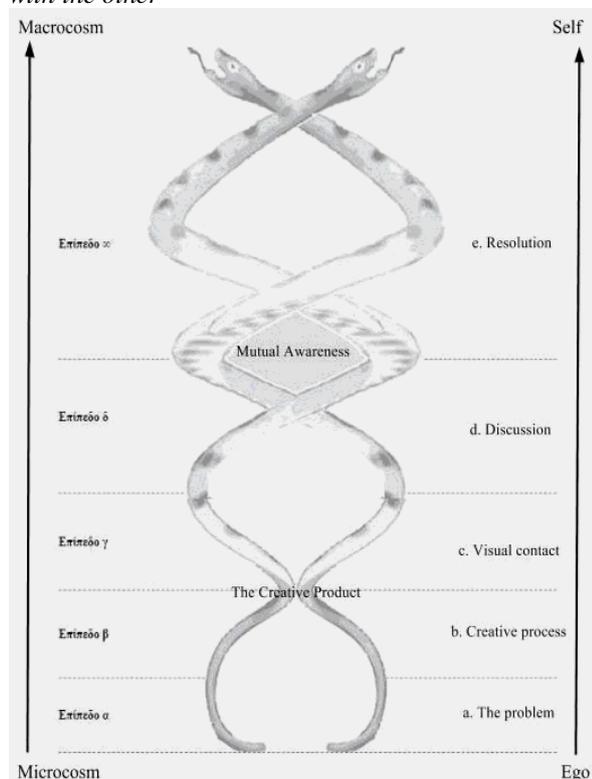

Methodology

Sample Group

The full body of the research was conducted during the period 2009-2013, in 12 high schools and a group of young adults in Athens, Greece. However, in the paper we present the second basic research that was conducted in 7 schools in Athens, during the month of November, 2012, in order to demonstrate the application of the proposed model (the model derived from the first basic research) and its implications. Approximately, 180 male and female students (15-16 years old) of Greek, Eastern European, Asian and African origins, were selected for this second research. The multicultural aspect of the sample served as an element of the rhizomatic character of the whole research as an 'action' for minority groups, expressed through supporting multiplicity.

The Process

The research's methodology aimed to verify the validity of the proposed model and, therefore it was based on it. The process, even though it continued to be 'free and open', was conducted on a basis of five levels, which were briefly presented to students at the beginning. The exact title of the research was not mentioned, as the word 'conflict' was considered to be somewhat violent for students, along with the concept of 'multiculturalism', which has been largely misunderstood in Greece and could potentially create problems in the procedure. Furthermore, conflicts were not a given amongst those groups. After the end of the procedure, the students were asked to write a short review about the research.

Phase A

At the first four schools, students were divided into groups of boys and girls, while in the other three schools, students were given the option to choose one of the words 'solidarity, honesty, love, trust, peace', in order to trigger the emergence of social issues. Students were divided into groups, according to the word they wanted to work with. The instructions for the groups of boys and girls were: 'Think of a message you want to pass to the other team', while the teams with the concepts were instructed to 'Think of a message you want to pass to the other team in relation to the word you

have chosen'. At level *a*, students focused on the message (which is the issue of concern and therefore mentioned as the 'problem' later in the text) and then at level *b* they were instructed to 'Think how you can represent this message with five photos' and so begun the creative exploration of the 'problem'. The five images had to be a sequence for the representation of the message, 'like comics, like a short story', as it was clarified. Later, it was announced that it is possible to capture these images with cameras provided by the researcher, and students began to delve deeper and deeper into the creative process. Due to the fact that the study did not permit underage students to be photographed, figures of clay and plasticine were made, in order to facilitate the representation of the message.

When the students finished with the mental exploration of the five images, which they had been working on, during the creative exploration of the 'problem', they were then encouraged to work with the cameras. After photographing the five images, they returned the cameras and a break followed. At that point, Phase A had ended. During the break, the photos were passed onto the computer and in preparation to be presented by the researcher.

Phase B

After the break, at level *c*, the photographs were first presented to each group that had created them in order to confirm that 'this is the desired result'. Afterwards, they were presented to the whole class. Students sat according to the group in which they had worked with and discussed the photos in the group, after each presentation ended. Later, the time for verbal interaction arrived, level *d*, where there was a discussion, between the two groups, about the images presented. At that point, the discussion was open and the role of the researcher quite distinctive, in order to allow the process of the participants and their autonomy as a group. In this case, phase C, which concerns the resolution of the conflict, was difficult to be distinguished from level *d*. Finally, the students were asked to make an evaluation of their experience and the process.

Results

As we mentioned earlier, the seven cases were divided in two different sections. The first section, which included four schools, concerned gender issues, while the second section, which included the other three schools, concerned certain meanings. Even though there was a restriction in photographing faces, due to underage participants, many students wished to include themselves in the photos, covering their faces with hoods or other garments. In schools where students were divided into boys and girls the need for such an activity was evident as the issue of gender relations concerned the majority of the students. In the other case of groups concerned with words and meanings, the messages regarded mainly social phenomena. In continuation we will examine the seven cases in two separate sections, according to the issues that were examined, i.e. Gender Issues and Meanings.

Groups of boys and girls

The topic of exploration, resulting from the division in groups of boys and girls, was the relationship between sexes. Preparing images for the other team was like preparing a 'gift'. During the presentation of the images, students attended sometimes silently and sometimes commenting on the images they saw. After presenting the 'gift' they had prepared for the other team, they expected an answer. The discussion helped students to express anything that was in their minds and their concern in relation to the subject, through sending and receiving a message.

Messages concerned mainly, emotional needs from girls and emotional and material needs of girls from boys (Figure 2 and 3). At that point, they began to actively interact with each other and express their views on gender issues. The conversation usually started in calmness and then tension followed. Short stories unfolded within the big one and thus the discussion acquired a rich texture. At some point, tension would reach the maximum and then 'catharsis' (emotional release, relief or cleansing) would arrive. This phase involved the climax and retained the dynamic of the process for resolving the conflict.

Finally, new insights manifested in moments like the one when a student proposed a second meeting outside the school; when another student gave the solution by coming up with a

phrase of mutual awareness; or when students realized how different yet similar both sexes are. According to theories of creativity, this is described as the 'epiphany', the moment of 'eureka' (Boden, 2003).


Figure 2. *The message of girls, regarding boys' ignorance.*
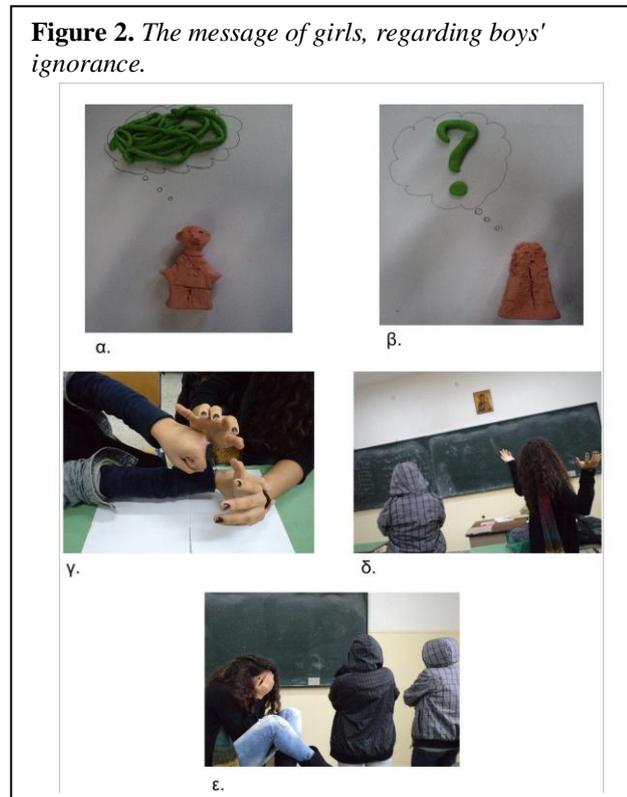
Groups of concepts

Once the research was conducted in the above manner at four schools, we thought it would be interesting to integrate the next three schools into another 'dimension', 'provoking' students to deal with certain social issues during the process. Accordingly, students during the discussion referred to very important and delicate issues, such as the lack of love, racism, individualism and violence, which were either related to the school environment or the society in which they live (Figure 4). They felt comfortable enough to discuss personal matters that concerned themselves and their classmates.

In one of the schools, violence and gang forming was extensively discussed and, as it seemed, some students were personally involved in such cases, supporting violence, whereas others were against it (Figure 5). The argument over this matter brought tension, which eventually transformed into

constructive dialog, facilitating both sides to come into agreement. Another widely discussed issue, was the economic crisis and how it has affected Greek society. Some students expressed various forms of racism during the discussion, provoking their classmates to talk about the implications of racism. Finally, some others pointed out the importance of personal evolution, in a context of solidarity that can and has to happen, through the crisis.

Figure 3. *The message of boys, regarding girls' concern with their appearance.*
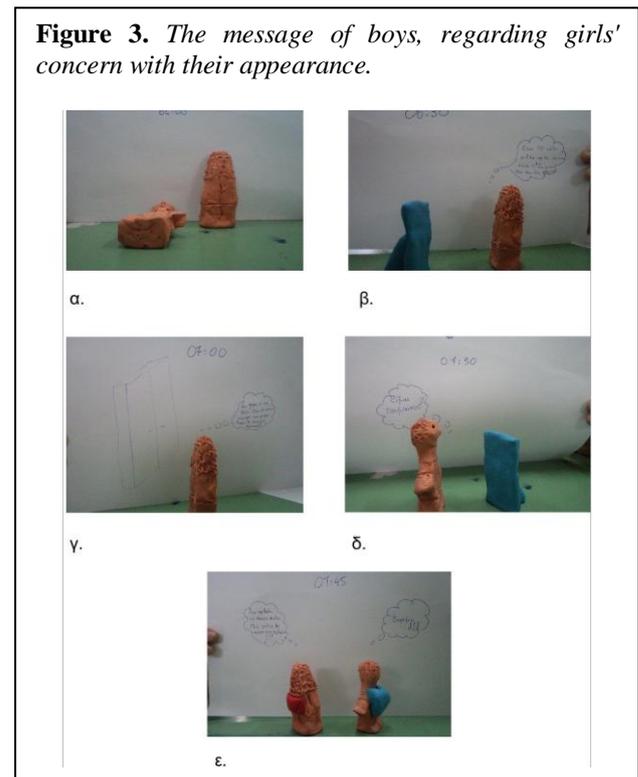
The classroom had then been converted into a safe environment for analysis, discussion and elaboration of these issues. There were concerns, fears, insecurities and dreams, wishes and expectations for the future. That part of the process had been transformed into a space in which time played no longer such an important role and provided a sense of security and relaxation.

Evaluation from the students

After the end of the process, students were asked to make a personal assessment of it, anonymously and secretly. Some of their comments are listed below in order to demonstrate the impact the experience had on the students, working on conflict resolution through the five levels and the three phases of the proposed model. The comments were summarized into certain

concepts, in order to display the most significant ones for the present research, according to the results.

In relation to *conflict resolution* some students wrote:

"It was an auxiliary procedure in order to express our problems and to make some improvements', 'it surfaced many differences, which we probably had for a long time with our peers, but we were not given before the opportunity to express and resolve them in a civilized way', 'we understood the mindset of the boys and ours".

Figure 4. *Depiction of the meaning of love, through the example of women's solidarity.*
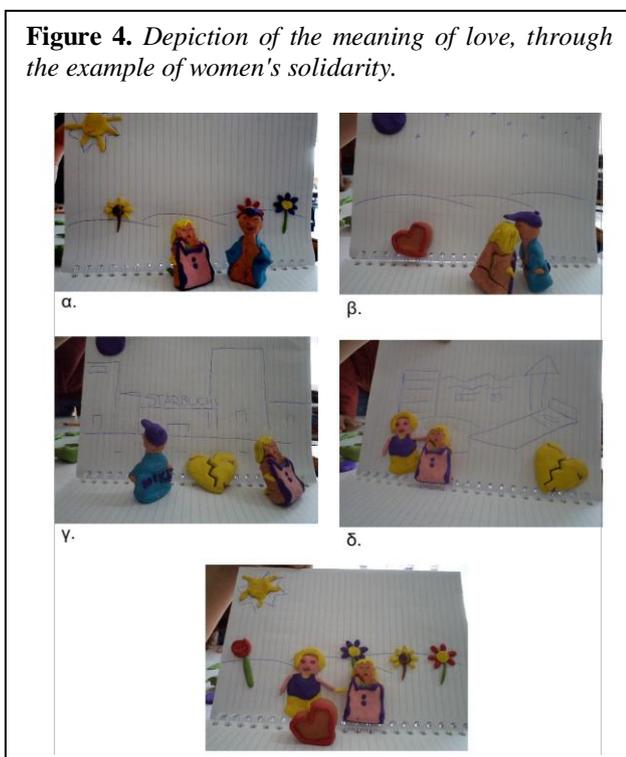
Some other students mentioned the importance of *dialogue*, *cooperation* and *communication* by writing the following:

"We have collaborated successfully. The fact that in only two credit hours we came closer is remarkable, we did a lot of things and above all a creative dialogue", "Very creative and effective process through teamwork", "everyone should respect each other's opinion through understanding and

togetherness", "the collaboration has helped communication".

Many students also reported some thoughts in relation to the use of the *image* facilitating communication and dialogue:

"The communication between the two teams is fun through images and messages", "it should be introduced as a lesson because it sharpens perception and is a way to talk and express through art everything we are afraid or ashamed to say and perhaps be able to change some things we do not like", "through a photo, one can understand the feelings and the mood of the people".

Students realized the importance of creativity and the use of the *image* for a constructive dialogue. Furthermore, the importance of non-verbal communication in a dispute resolution process was perceived.

Figure 5. *Depiction of solidarity, in contrast to violence*
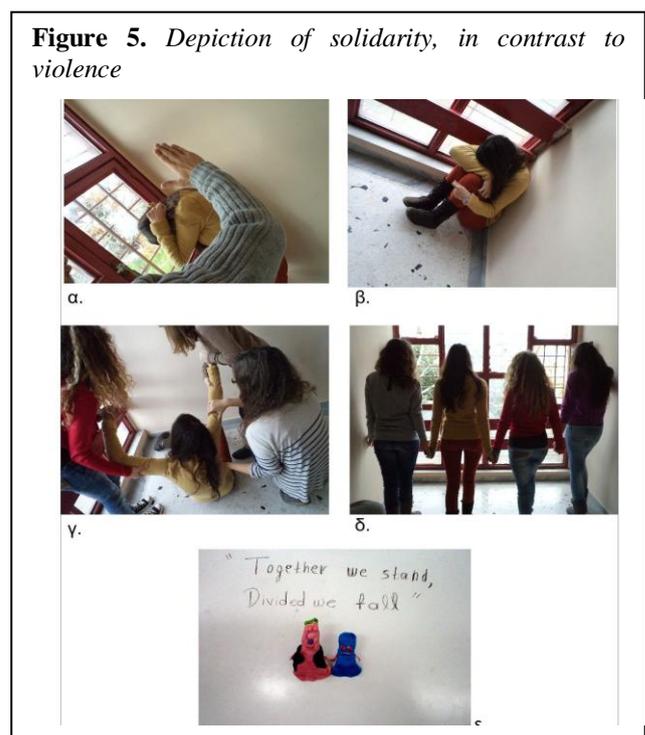
In the evaluation, many students wrote about more *personal experiences*, feelings and thoughts that they had during and after the process, both in relation to themselves, and in relation to others. In relation to others and the world some of the students wrote, for example:

"It gave me strength to fight for our rights", "I was given the opportunity to get to know people and their needs", "I understood things I did not know so well before".

Some others linked their ideas about the world with their personal experience:

"Every man in order to be good to those around him he must be good to himself", "I learned how to express what I have in my mind and I am thinking (...) every man must change and become better, in order to live in a better world", "If every human changed his life, the world would change", "in order to improve our society everyone needs to try to change himself for the better", "the love that exists in our time still gives me faith to move on...".

Finally, there were some testimonials which were even more personal, from students who seemed to be resistant during the process and had extreme views regarding some social issues such as racism. One student wrote "many things came to my mind, which I believe will help me to modify things for which I had a different view before".

Another student, who previously argued that violence through gangs is the only solution, in the evaluation wrote:

"Very interesting process, it helped me to bond more with my classmates because for some reason I felt comfortable to express myself. It is very good to let the students discuss among them so they can resolve any differences between them and exchange views which are very useful and informative for everyone".

Discussion

The dialectic relation between conscious and unconscious is one of the manifestations of the complementary opposites, through interaction, and an essential element for the natural execution of the process. These contrasts are also manifested in other forms, such as positive and negative or female and male.

Furthermore, in the case of each survey we discern specific contrasts during the debates, such as violence and non-violence, love and lack of love, collectivism and individualism. The interrelationship between opposite concepts, which are both social and personal, needs to be healthy, in order for evolution to occur. An imaginary bridge between two, seemingly, opposite concepts is the means to bringing them together and facilitating their collaborative operation. The same applies in conflict resolution. Two opposing sides need to come together through a 'bridge', represented in this case by the proposed model.

Having reported extensively on the structure of the model, it can be concluded that creativity plays a very important role in resolving a conflict, for several reasons. Besides it being a way that can lead to resolution, creativity is also a means to express and weaken emotions that hinder resolution. Simultaneously, it brings to the surface emotions of varying qualities, which in turn replace the negative ones and open the way to resolution. Resolution coincides with the moment of enlightenment, the 'eureka'. The image can trigger various subliminal thoughts and feelings, which can be expressed openly and interact creatively with the 'other' side.

However, the research was conducted under restrictions regarding time and therefore deeper exploration of conflicts. While the conflicts examined were mostly hypothetical, the results concerned the potential of such process and do not allow generalization. Specifically, the groups of boys and girls were created according to research conditions and do not represent an actual division according to the students' ideas or will, whereas the groups of meanings formed according to their own will but without having any actual conflict with the other group. Therefore, what is mostly described is a way to gain better mutual understanding through the use of images.

Finally, while resolution is the desired result, it does not mean that it will definitely occur. At this point, we note a common feature between the path of Eλouroboros and the individuation process of Carl G. Jung. Individuation, which is the 'Eleysis' (advent) to the Self, is the process of unification of the conscious with the unconscious

and, even though it may never be realized, it is the goal of the process (Bennet, 2011). Likewise, the process of the Eλouroboros is a way to the Self.

Conclusion

In short, students expressed their opinion regarding the process, mentioning the importance of conflict resolution, dialogue, communication, cooperation, and images. Furthermore, there were some more personal thoughts in relation to their personal development, the society in which they live and the interaction between these two. The awareness triggered by the images, became a key for reconciliation.

Taking a closer look, we see that conflict is a 'cry' for reconciliation. In some cases where there was less interest in the process, there was no intense interaction between the conflicting states, and therefore no agreement. On the other hand, through de-escalation of tension, resolution was possible and very much probable.

Creative conflict resolution through the use of images is a domain that needs further exploration. Its effectiveness and potential are of great importance and open a door to a whole new approach regarding conflict. However, in real life, conditions are different and the application of the model should be performed with awareness and only in cases where it is sought by the future participants. According to the point of view presented in this paper, conflict is seen as a motive to start the journey to the Self. Through the Eλouroboros, a creative way of resolution is proposed, which integrates basic human needs and rights.

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