

CONFERENCE: TEMPERAMENTS, MORE TOPICAL THAN EVER

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Temperaments are used more than ever in psychiatry, criminology, child psychology and human resources, especially those derived from the four Hippocratic humours that have been properly updated for our times (see the article “*Khôra, Spatial Symbolism in Plato –a revalidation of temperaments and character typologies in handwriting*”). To give one very up-to-the-minute example: the French CNRS (*Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*) has a permanent group of researchers dedicated to psychology of the temperaments.

Augusto Vels himself applied Periot's adaptations (previously adapted by Sigaud), which were further improved by Computerised Handwriting Analysis, arriving at his final version in the year 2000, the year he unfortunately passed away. Since then, current behavioural thinkers have continued to be in agreement on the undoubted importance of the temperaments and their influence on the personality.

The temperaments, especially those based on the four elements, (also related to blood types; Vector L: O, S: A, B: B and N: AB), constitute clear, genetically influenced and biologically based predispositions, for which reason, despite their interaction with the character, they remain more stable and difficult to modify than the peculiarities of the latter. Logically, they tell us only of psychophysical potential (emotionality, reactivity, extro-/introversion, roots of the channelling of psychosomatic energy) but they are very important for the study and configuration of the global personality. It is precisely due to the temperament that we can explain important facets of psychobiological influence on the personality, manifested in handwriting in the speed, impetuosity or force of the gestural expression, often with a clear differentiation with respect to character.

Recently Cloninger and Sven confirmed this importance with the success of their research into the use of their questionnaires. The Temperament and Character Inventory TCI-R (TCI-140) is also related with Psychopathological Personality Scales (MMPI-2 PSY-5). The short, Spanish version of the TCI-R is now also a useful inventory for the evaluation of the principal dimensions of temperament and character.

The essential correlation is established in the following way: New Elements Search (NS from the N Vector) was associated with low Constriction, HA (from the L Vector) with low Positive Emotionality and Aggressiveness and with high Negative Emotionality/Neuroticism and Reward Dependence (RD from the S Vector) with high

Positive Emotionality. Persistence (PS from the B Vector) was related to high Aggressiveness and Positive Emotionality.

Despite having created characterological Transactional Handwriting Analysis' of the nine exteriorisations of the ego, that are endorsed in many points by the Enneagram (in the correlation of the psychological characteristics of the nine types, not in the pantheism suggested by the said philosophical doctrine) and that TA is a psychoanalytic system of individual and social psychiatry that includes the gestural and integrates humanism and behaviourism in a suitable way, signifying a substantial advance in current Handwriting Analysis, it is necessary to make it very clear that at no point do we abandon the temperaments. In fact, there would be no TA without the temperaments. In the structural analysis of the three systems, the temperaments are located in the "Child system" and are the biological motor which we bring with us at birth as our inheritance and genetic configuration. They are used together with emotional recordings form the whole framework of the said archaeopsyché or "Child system", where each temperament influences the reception of the information recorded in the "Parent system" in order to respond in one way or another, which follow the potential of the neopsyché or "Adult system" and in accordance with the system that holds the executive power in the cathexis, will facilitate one or another of the Ego's externalisations in the form of the nine states we typically express or as characteristics derived from the TA.

TA aside, in our work: *Psychodiagnostic Assessment via Handwriting*, which is a teaching manual where we try to understand the concepts above all else, putting forward a teaching comparison between the temperaments and motor vehicles: *Phlegmatic* or Sigaud's digestive temperament is a van (slow and deliberate but adapted for weight and perseverance), the *Sanguine* or Sigaud's respiratory as a sport's car or competitive prototype (shiny and expansive), the *Choleric* or Sigaud's muscular as a standard effective and efficient model (consistent and self-regulating) and the *Melancholic* or Sigaud's cerebral temperament as a motorcycle (variation, acceleration, independence). In Kretschmer's and Sheldon's personality types, the predominant "actives" of the sanguine and bile temperament are grouped together in the "mesomorph", leaving the remainder (L: pyknic-endomorph, N: Leptosomatic-ectomorph). The previous study of temperament supposes at the same time a preparation of the ground for understanding character study next. Character will indicate the form of behaviour, and finally, the personality will identify the specific individual by his uniqueness, originality and difference from others.

Beyond strictly educational examples, it is also necessary to mention the current practical utility of the temperaments because of their essential contribution in relation to the difference between individuals with respect to their reactivity (a crucial element brought by the temperaments), a peculiarity that is linked to the strength or capacity for exciting the nervous system and that remains quantitatively and qualitatively reflected in responses or reactions to stimulation.

We have been able to prove that temperament has a determining influence on personal and social development, and that current research confirms earlier observations, categorically demonstrating that temperament in the business and social context is the order of the day in any scientific protocol, in the application of the most advanced techniques in Human Resources.

Similarly, aside from medical and psychological interest, the study of temperament is becoming a predictor of behavioural problems, especially externalised symptoms, which have proved to be very effective in criminology and of great interest for profiling. In fact, determining a difficult temperament (low rhythmicity, difficult behavioural regulation and negative affectivity) from 3 years of age is a early tell-tale sign of risk behaviour in the pre-adolescent, adolescent and adult stage, such as drug addiction, aggressiveness and criminal activity, since temperamentally they are predisposed to greater physiological and psychic irritability and a negative affectivity that is boosted according to specific, environmental variables (presence of stress and inappropriate parental restrictions on behaviour). Other studies that relate bio-typological constitution (body

group) to delinquency have been carried out based on the Kretschmer, Heymans-Wiersma-Le Senne, and Sheldon personality types, heavily applied in criminological research.

Of special significance are the studies that relate temperament and linguistics, confirming that the process of language acquisition, including vocabulary, grammatical structure, etc..., (in other words linguistic style), is found to be mediated through the characteristics of temperament in its inter-relation with social environment. More specifically, on handwriting, the latest research has confirmed a significant relationship between emotional reactivity and handwriting performance.

Thus, it is a great pleasure to be able to state that the new theories include and reaffirm the temperaments, especially those derived from Plato's elements and the Hippocratic humours; they take them into account and constantly revalidate them. Proof of this (apart from the distinguished work being done by American doctors and psychologists) is that in Spain alone, we can say that of the 34 doctoral theses in Psychiatry and Psychology concerning the temperaments that have been written in recent decades (not including those concerning the temperaments in art and literature which also amount to a good number). There has been a progressive increase, reaching 44.11% between the years 2000-2006, and 6 of which have been presented in Barcelona.

Within our Graphology study programmes at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, the Institut de Ciències del Grafisme (Institute of Graphological Studies) and the AGC of Spain, we are very happy to include the temperaments in our training and further training of handwriting analysts. Experience has taught us that graduates in the Psychological Analysis of Handwriting from UAB are completely prepared and their training is the most suitable, since in a world where we cannot stop, it is dangerous to limit oneself to a single method or school. The great advantage of Vels' Graphoanalysis and Transactional Graphoanalysis is that they are integrated into the other schools. In university, the future grapho-analyst will be trained first in the basic concepts and French contributions, then the Italian and German schools, but as happens with the tests, which always have to be adapted to the place where they are being set, in our case we will always bear in mind the Spanish school and carry out the appropriate adaptations of other schools to our own idiosyncrasies and in a fully practical way. This is the secret of our success and that is why companies and organisations have confidence in our graduates.

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