

## SÁNDOR FERENCZI AND THE ORIGINS OF HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

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### ABSTRACT

This article discusses Sándor Ferenczi's contributions to the evolution of psychoanalytic theories, and how these ideas were passed through the generations. Ferenczi introduced such concepts as greater activity by the psychotherapist, the need for emotional connection between the therapist and client, the significance of the interpersonal aspects of the therapeutic experience, and the place of empathy within the therapeutic milieu. The second generation reviewed here is the Neo-Freudian, including Andras Angyal, Izette deForest, Erich Fromm, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, Karen Horney, Harry Stack Sullivan, and Clara Thompson. The next generation reviewed is that of the foremost humanistic psychologists, Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, Carl Rogers, and James Bugental.

### INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on Sándor Ferenczi's impact upon the ideas of four co-founders of humanistic psychology. The essay is divided into three sections; the first reviews the origins of psychoanalysis, and the importance of Sándor Ferenczi's ideas to this process; the second section examines how Ferenczi's ideas influenced the neo-Freudians, and how this next generation employed his theories; the final section of this essay explores the ways in which the co-founders of humanistic psychology, Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, Carl Rogers, and James Bugental were influenced directly and indirectly by Ferenczi.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF SANDOR FERENCZI TO PSYCHOANALYSIS

Humanistic psychology evolved partly as a response to the teachings of psychoanalysis and behaviorism: "Some psychologists... drew upon a long tradition linking psychology with the humanities and in a rebellious manner, institutionally founded humanistic psychology. They regarded themselves as a "third force," alluding to the fact that they were an alternative to the dominant behaviorist and psychoanalytic orientation in psychology. (deCarvalho, 1991, p.1).

However, it is important to note that psychoanalysis was not always presented as one solid theory, or even a coherent theoretical framework. There were always dissident theorists. The early history of psychoanalysis is replete with a series of conflicts: there were many competing ideas, and there was considerable disagreement within the ranks of the early psychoanalytic pioneers. Before Sándor Ferenczi's dissident view became prominent, two outstanding members of the original group around Sigmund Freud, namely Alfred Adler, and Carl Jung, presented views which caused stressful contact with Freud.

It is important to note that Alfred Adler was one of the earliest dissenters from Freudian theory. "In 1911 Adler, with nine of the 35 members of the Vienna Society, resigned to found the Society for Free Psychoanalysis, which soon became the Society for Individual Psychology" (Grosskurth, 1991, p. 9).

Carl Jung engaged in a series of theoretical and personal disagreements with Sigmund Freud for many years. Many of these conflicts had deep personal roots. In a letter to Ernest Jones (Freud's biographer) dated November 15, 1912, Jung stated: "Freud ... was convinced that I am under the domination of a father" complex against him and that all is complex- neurosis. It would break me, if I were not prepared for it through the struggle of that past year, where I liberated myself from the regard of the father. (Grosskurth,

1991, p. 51)

By 1913, Jung had “resigned his editorship of the annual psychoanalytic journal, the *Jahrbuch*, and in April 1914 he resigned the presidency of the Association” (Grosskurth, 1991, p. 52). Therefore, by the time that Sigmund Freud established the Secret Committee in May 1913, Alfred Adler and Carl Jung had already broken away and sought their own pathways. After the break with Adler and Jung, Freud was without a close friend or associate. Sándor Ferenczi’s relationship to Freud helped him heal the personal and professional wounds of the Adler and Jung defections.

Sándor Ferenczi was born in Hungary in 1873, the eighth of 12 children. He graduated from medical school in 1894; and interned in several hospitals in Budapest, first working with prostitutes, and later specializing in neurology, and neuropathology. His early student interests included psychic phenomena and hypnotism (Rachman, 1997, pp. 1-7).

Ferenczi first met Freud in 1908, and became a cherished, trusted and indulged confidant. He was invited to join the Freud family on vacations, and even traveled alone with Freud (Grosskurth, 1991, p. 52). In 1909, Ferenczi was one of three psychoanalysts to accompany Sigmund Freud to America (the other analysts were Ernest Jones and Carl Jung). “The Clark [University] lectures not only introduced psychoanalysis to America, but also established Freudian psychology as a legitimate area of academic study” (Rachman, 1997, p. 24). Many consider Ferenczi to have been the warmest, most human, most sensitive of the early psychoanalytic group. Short and expressive, poetical and not egotistical, interested in other people and always eager to help, Ferenczi was charming and imaginative. (Roazen, 1971, p. 358)

Perhaps this description of Ferenczi’s personality contains the elements that are predictive of the epic struggles that were to ensue between Freud and Ferenczi. “For the first ten years or so of their friendship, they were inseparable” (Rachman, 1997, p. 21). Furthermore, Ferenczi had a singular status. “Of the original Committee, only Sándor Ferenczi had undergone a formal analysis... with Freud, for short stretches, -- a few weeks -- in 1914 and 1916” (Roazen, 1971, p. 357).

What was the cause of the conflicts between Freud and Ferenczi? There were many underlying factors, but, as with Alfred Adler and Carl Jung, the precipitants of the struggle had always been theoretical disputes. The initial problem was described as follows:

Although Ferenczi was as talented a theorist as any of Freud’s disciples,...his greatest interest lay in therapeutic techniques...Ferenczi was inclined to experiment with and improve upon “classical” psychoanalytic technique,...his changes were in the direction of “elasticity “ and “relaxation” of Freud’s more austere recommendations. Where Freud was often intolerant of a patient’s regressions in therapy ...Ferenczi was able to meet a patient at least halfway, to make of the therapeutic relationship a genuine interpersonal encounter. (Roazen, 1971, p. 363)

The *Development of Psychoanalysis*, co-authored by Ferenczi and Otto Rank in 1923, was a guidepost for the future. This book advocated a radical shift in both the theory and the process of psychotherapy, which would foreshadow the changes made explicit in humanistic psychology.

Although one could view the reemphasis on the emotional component as the necessary holistic approach to a deeper and more emotionally meaningful analysis, Ferenczi and Rank placed additional emphasis on the interpersonal component, a radical departure for psychoanalysis (Rachman, 1997, p. 32)

One might question what these ideas would imply, but we are told explicitly:

Ferenczi and Rank emphasized the importance of current realities in treatment, they aimed to shorten therapy, and they stressed the intercommunication between patient and analyst...But any improvement in techniques entailed...more “activity” and involvement on the analyst’s part than had heretofore been explicitly sanctioned. (Roazen, 1971, p. 364)

An important component of this increased activity by the analyst would be revealed by his/her behavior toward the patient. Writing in his clinical diary, Ferenczi reflected how disturbed he was “by the distanced superiority Freud had been displaying towards his patients with the passage of time” (Grosskurth, 1991, p. 211).

The significance of an analyst’s attitude and the levels of involvement within the therapeutic environment are important historical concepts: they presage the shifts that were enacted and implemented by the neo-

Freudians, and then further explored and expanded by the humanistic psychologists.

Three books, all originally encouraged by Freud, were responsible for the eventual dissolution of the Committee: the book written jointly by Rank and Ferenczi, *The Development of Psychoanalysis*,...Rank's *The Trauma of Birth*,...and Ferenczi's *Thalassa: A Theory of Genitality*. Indeed, Rank had dedicated *The Trauma of Birth* to Freud as "The Explorer of the Unconscious." (Grosskurth, 1991, p. 138)

Otto Rank gave his first lecture in the United States in 1924, in which he introduced his trauma theories. "The translation of the birth trauma into clinical therapeutics would mean that a successful psychotherapy would consist of a psychological rebirth" (Rachman, 1997,

p. 77). Otto Rank was originally very well received in America, but soon "Freud received a number of adverse reports about Rank from psychoanalysts in New York" (Grosskurth, 1991,

p. 160). It was at this time that Rank and Freud began to exchange a series of letters that became increasingly hostile. Although Ferenczi attempted to become an arbitrator, he met with no success. There were many years of conflict between Freud and Rank.

Finally, Otto Rank "was...branded as a pariah....For some years, he moved between Paris and the U.S., finally settling in Philadelphia, where he played an active role in the Pennsylvania School of Social Work" (Grosskurth, 1991, p. 184). Many of Rank's works were translated by Jessie Taft, a social worker from that school. It was from this source that Carl Rogers learned about Otto Rank. Otto Rank was another prominent member of Freud's Secret Committee to become first a dissenter, and then a defector. It should be emphasized, however, that although Ferenczi became one of the first "dissidents" in psychoanalysis, he never became a defector.

In "The Elasticity of Psychoanalytic Technique" (1928), Ferenczi continued the discussion he had begun in his active approach, that is to say, the emotional attunement of the therapist to the client. In the example presented here, Ferenczi offered his ideas about attunement, as well as about potential new analytic techniques.

I recalled ...an uneducated, apparently quite simple patient who brought forward objections to an interpretation of mine, which it was my immediate impulse to reject; but on reflection, not I, but the patient turned out to be right, and the result of his intervention was a much better understanding of the matter we were dealing with. (Ferenczi, 1928, p. 94)

In this example, Ferenczi demonstrated elasticity of analytic technique, since he permitted himself to be corrected by his client (patient); additionally, he illustrated the use of tact, and/ or empathy. Ferenczi introduced the importance of clinical empathy. "I have come to the conclusion that it is above all a question of psychological tact whether one should tell the patient some particular thing. But what is "tact"? It is the capacity for empathy" (Ferenczi, 1928, p. 89).

It is imperative we recognize that this discussion highlights two concepts first presented by Sandor Ferenczi in 1928, which were to change the shape of psychoanalytic treatment, and encourage the development of humanistic psychology, namely, analyst self-disclosure and clinical empathy.

Ferenczi suggested other analytic changes based upon his clinical experiments with empathy and his experience with difficult cases (Ferenczi, 1930). His conceptualization of an analytic session differed from the traditional Freudian viewpoint. In one example he stated:

My attempts to adhere to the principle that a patient must be in a lying position... [and] would at times be thwarted by their uncontrollable impulse to get up and walk about the room or speak to me face to face... I often had to devote two or more hours a day to a single patient. (Ferenczi, 1930, p. 114)

In this fragment, Ferenczi acknowledged two additional major changes within the session structure: the patient had risen from the couch, walked around the room, and even addressed the analyst face to face. Furthermore, Ferenczi had been flexible enough to allow for a variation in the length of the session, when he had felt it was necessary.

Another innovation introduced by Ferenczi was the democratization of the doctor/patient relationship. The analyst could move from the omnipotent, paternalistic Freudian model, into a collaborative, democratic and mutually supportive partnership. This specific innovation was forwarded by the neo-Freudians, and subsequently implemented by the humanistic psychologists.

One of Ferenczi's most significant papers was "The Confusion of Tongues Between Adults and the Child: The Language of Tenderness and of Passion," (1933), which was presented at the 12th International Psychoanalytic Conference. When Ferenczi presented this paper, he was focusing upon an important theoretical and clinical issue, Freud's seduction hypothesis. During the early years of psychoanalysis, Freud had written about "the traumatic effect of childhood sexual seduction on the adult patient, and [he] believed it was a causal factor in the development of neurosis" (Freud, 1954, pp. 195-196). In a letter from Freud to Fliess, dated September 21, 1897, Freud said he was mistaken in believing the reports of sexual seduction. Specifically, he "could not believe that all the reports of father-daughter incest were true" (Freud, 1954, p. 216).

Ferenczi, a clinician whose practice contained incest survivors (Rachman, 1997), believed the stories about rape and seduction recounted by his patients. Masson (1984) explained:

Ferenczi's paper [The Confusion of Tongues] is a response to Freud's abandonment of the seduction theory, for it asserts that a real trauma can itself give rise to horrible fantasies

– that these fantasies derive from a real event, they do not replace it. People fall ill from what happened to them, not from what they imagine happened to them. (Masson, 1984, p. 186)

Once again, Ferenczi had challenged Freud and the psychoanalytic mainstream with his ideas. There was an additional challenge within this specific paper; the challenge was for the psychoanalyst to reexamine his or her relationship with the patient.

Ferenczi was identifying a confusion of tongues in the psychoanalytic situation; characterized by the analysand experiencing the analyst as unempathic...Ferenczi was identifying the relational dimension in the psychoanalytic situation, where the analyst is not willing to create a democratic, mutual, and emotionally sincere relationship with the analysand. The analyst hides behind the tradition of transference and resistance...Such a tradition does not incorporate...an ongoing analysis of the countertransference for a stance that encourages the analyst to examine his or her contribution to the analytic process. (Rachman, 1997, p. 241)

Ferenczi (1933) returned to his theme of analyst self-disclosure:

The admission of analyst's error produced confidence in his patient...The setting free of his critical feelings, the willingness on our part to admit our mistakes and the honest endeavor to avoid them in the future; all these go to create a confidence in the analyst. It is this confidence that established the contrast between the present and the unbearable traumatogenic past. (p. 160)

Ferenczi was making revolutionary demands upon the therapist: the therapist needed to examine his or her own emotional responses to the patient (countertransference), and needed to acknowledge freely any mistakes made in interpreting material. The honesty and integrity required of the therapist could help the patient differentiate between the past (in which emotional dishonesty had been commonplace, which produced a state of confusion), and the present analytic situation.

This attuning to the analysand's view of the therapeutic process, as well as the belief that the analysand's view was as significant as the analyst's, was truly revolutionary...The analyst, in a Ferenczian analysis, would first search his or her own functioning to see whether the criticism of the analyst had validity before considering it as a resistance or evoking a transference interpretation. (Rachman, 1997, p. 251)

Although Ferenczi's ideas and methods were controversial in his era, many of his innovations were influential for the Neo-Freudians and afterwards for the humanistic psychologists.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF FERENCZI'S IDEAS TO THE NEO-FREUDIANS**

The neo-Freudians were a very diverse group, both culturally and educationally. The American members of the group were Clara Thompson and Harry Stack Sullivan; the Europeans were Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, and Frieda Fromm-Reichmann. Two lesser known figures also contributed to the transmission of Ferenczi's ideas, Izette deForest and Andras Angyal.

The American Interpersonalists were very active in keeping Ferenczi's heritage alive. Harry Stack Sullivan heard Sandor Ferenczi speak at least twice during his 6-month American visit. On Christmas Day, 1926, Sullivan attended a meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association, at which time Ferenczi

lectured on the subject of “Present –Day Problems in Psychoanalysis” (Alexander, Eisenstein, & Grotjahn, 1966, p. 27). When Ferenczi traveled to Washington, D.C. in April 1927, “to speak on ‘The Genital Theory,’ both [William Alanson] White and Sullivan [were] participating as discussants. But there is no record of any significant personal contact between Ferenczi and Sullivan (Perry, 1982, p. 228).

Sullivan had persuaded Thompson to go to Budapest to study with Ferenczi. In the summer of 1928, Thompson made her first trip to Budapest, spending two months in analysis with Ferenczi; she followed the same schedule for the next two summers...Subsequently, until Ferenczi’s death in 1933, she went for longer periods to Budapest. (Perry, 1982, p. 228)When Clara Thompson returned to New York, she shared Ferenczi’s ideas with Sullivan in an unusual way; she psychoanalyzed him, utilizing what she had learned from Ferenczi. “Sullivan had about 300 hours of psychoanalysis by her.... They stopped because she had such awe of Sullivan’s intellectual capacities, that she could not go on with it” (Chapman, 1976, p. 53).

Therefore, we must understand that the dialogue between Sándor Ferenczi and Harry Stack Sullivan was actually conducted through Clara Thompson. There were four major areas of interest that were shared by these two pioneers. They both believed that the new field of psychiatry should offer help to people with varying degrees and types of mental disorder, and to people from all social classes. Second, both men believed that social class might be a determinant factor in the development of psychiatric problems, and that poverty might produce a variety of psychiatric symptoms. The third area of agreement between Ferenczi and Sullivan was focused upon those patients who had sexual fears and deep concerns about homosexuality. The theory that was presented by both men was that this specific preoccupation might be an obsessional idea, or a symptom of other problems (Perry, 1982, pp. 228-230).

The fourth area of agreement in the theoretical formulations of Sullivan and Ferenczi concerned countertransference. As previously mentioned, Ferenczi had developed a clinical focus upon the countertransference aspects of the therapy session. This became one of his major disagreements with the teachings of Freud. Freud saw countertransference as a hindrance to the therapeutic process, while Ferenczi saw it as a part of the two-person experience of the analytic encounter.

Harry Stack Sullivan would recognize the importance of the therapist’s self-awareness. The Washington School of Psychiatry, co-founded by Sullivan in 1936, would implement this philosophy by insisting that any student who had dealings with the problems of other people, whether lawyer, minister, nursery school teacher, or social worker, should undergo “a searching scrutiny of his personal history, liabilities, and assets from the therapeutic standpoint” (from the Bulletin for the Washington School of Psychiatry, 1944-45, quoted in Perry, 1982, p.230).

It is important to acknowledge the part that Clara Thompson played in the transmission of Ferenczi’s ideas. There were several aspects to Thompson’s role. First, there was her personal connection to Harry Stack Sullivan, that was mentioned earlier, and which caused Thompson to begin her analysis with Ferenczi. It has been suggested that Thompson and Sullivan were engaged in a “professional marriage” (E. Taylor, personal communication, July 28, 1997). Sullivan and Thompson had met in 1923, and “on every dimension, except probably one...sexual intimacy...this relationship became one of the most important in his life, as well as hers” (Perry, 1982, p. 201).

The second contribution Thompson made to the history of psychoanalytic ideas was her ability to write with great clarity. It was Clara Thompson who, when she found compatibility between Ferenczi’s work and Sullivan’s ideas, “wove Sullivan’s interpersonal theory with strands from Ferenczi and [Erich] Fromm into the loose fabric of interpersonal psychoanalysis” (Mitchell & Black, 1995, p. 78). She acknowledged that the therapist’s personality was an important factor within the therapeutic environment, which was first discussed by Ferenczi and then by Sullivan. She discussed Ferenczi’s idea of the analyst’s self-disclosure as verifying the reality of the analysand. She also believed that positive transference reactions needed to make room for the negative affects, so as to curtail intimacy between the analyst and the patient. (Thompson, 1950).

Once again, Thompson reflected the more active, involved therapeutic role that had been espoused by Ferenczi and Sullivan. The idea of utilizing the therapeutic session to actually see the client in action, reacting to another person (or to other people in group therapy sessions) is a concept taught in many

contemporary schools. Therapists have been trained to say: “Let’s understand that whatever you do here, within the therapy session, you probably do outside as well; so let’s have a look at these behaviors together.” It is interesting to trace therapeutic approaches throughout the years, and one might conjecture that many of these ideas were to be reflected in the writings of Carl Rogers and James Bugental. This will be discussed in the third section.

It is important to note that Clara Thompson played a larger role historically than that of reporter and synthesizer of other people’s ideas. She was a strong and independent woman, in many ways ahead of her time, who had a viewpoint of her own. Not only did she help synthesize the ideas of Ferenczi and Sullivan, but Thompson, along with Sullivan and Fromm helped found the William Alanson White Institute in 1942, where Ferenczi’s work contributed significantly to the founding of the interpersonal/humanistic framework for psychoanalysis (Rachman, 1997, p. 396).

This training institute, which still exists, has offered courses to many generations of psychotherapists. One of the outstanding therapists who trained at the William Alanson White Institute was Rollo May, who subsequently taught there, and trained other therapists as well. We can thus see the transmission of Ferenczi’s ideas through the neo-Freudian era, directly into the work of one of the four co-founders of humanistic psychology.

Another neo-Freudian who played a significant role in passing Ferenczi’s ideas along through the generations was Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, who worked with seriously disturbed patients at Chestnut Lodge. Fromm-Reichmann (1950) stated “The therapeutic process should be an interpersonal experience between him [the client] and the psychiatrist (p. 45). It was Ferenczi, of course, who discussed this idea first.

Fromm-Reichmann also believed that the therapist should play a more active role within the session itself. Thompson (1950) discussed Fromm-Reichmann’s idea that the therapist should help to guide interactions to “pertinent free associations” (p. 233). In this instance, the therapist is being depicted as a facilitator, or a wise guide, who can offer directional assistance. This type of approach could be very helpful when working with the psychotic patient, for whom endless free-associations could be counter-productive. Once again, we observe the transmission of concepts through the generations: Ferenczi engaged his clinical patients, and offered assistance, and Fromm-Reichmann did the same with her hospitalized patients. The humanistic psychologists would discuss similar interventions when they presented their ideas in the next generation.

Among the neo-Freudians who made substantial contributions to the history of ideas are Erich Fromm and Karen Horney. I was able to trace the link between Horney and Ferenczi by interviewing Dr. Gisele Galdi, who is head of the trauma clinic at The Horney Institute. Galdi stated that:

Karen Horney had been influenced by the zeitgeist of Europe. She was one of the first tier of analysts after Freud, and had been analyzed by Karl Abraham in 1911. [Abraham was a member of Freud’s Secret Committee] Horney had met [Georg] Groddeck and had been impressed with his truthfulness, simplicity, and sincerity. (G. Galdi, Personal communication, June 14, 1999)

Georg Groddeck was a pivotal figure in the life of Horney, as he had become in the life of Ferenczi (Rachman, 1997). Susan Quinn, Horney’s biographer wrote:

Horney, faced with Freud’s increasingly incompatible view of women, began looking elsewhere for inspiration...Horney was also attracted to the ideas of an eccentric on the psychoanalytic fringe, a physician named Georg Groddeck [who ran a sanitarium in Baden- Baden]...Even before he read Freud, Groddeck had begun to suspect that a physical symptom could be a symbol, a representation of an emotional illness. (Quinn, 1987, p. 215)

A link between Ferenczi, Groddeck and Horney did exist. In 1922, at the International Psychoanalytic Association Congress, Horney and Ferenczi renewed their acquaintance with Groddeck, who was famous for his work in psychosomatic medicine (Groddeck, 1928). Subsequently, in 1923, when Karen Horney’s younger brother, Berndt, died of pneumonia, Horney “visited Groddeck at his sanitarium for support and treatment” (Galdi, Personal communication, June 14, 1999). Ferenczi had also made a significant connection with Groddeck: “Ferenczi was a frequent visitor to Groddeck’s sanitarium at Baden-Baden, going for the cure as much as to maintain contact with his kindred spirit” (Rachman, 1997, p. 84). Horney believed

that psychoanalysis had developed a “masculine psychology” that didn’t understand women. However, she felt that Ferenczi did pay tribute to women, citing Ferenczi’s extremely brilliant genital theory. His view is that the real incitement to coitus, its true ultimate meaning for both sexes, it to be sought in the desire to return to the mother’s womb....And what about Motherhood? And blissful consciousness of bearing a new life within oneself?...But from the biological point of view woman has in motherhood, or in the capacity for motherhood, a quite indisputable...physiological superiority. (Horney, 1967, pp.

59-60)

She wanted psychoanalysis to move towards a balanced picture of woman, “that would be more true to the facts of her nature -with its specific qualities and its differences from that of a man- than any we have hitherto achieved” (Horney, 1967, p. 70).

Horney (1937) took the stance that “basic anxiety was the consequence of pathogenic conditions,” and when she focused upon the defenses employed to cope with this anxiety, her insights became applicable to both men and women. (Paris, 1994, p. 100)

In 1939, in *New Ways in Psychoanalysis*, Horney moved further away from Freudian theories. She believed that Freud had overemphasized the biological sources of human behavior, and had not considered the cultural influences upon personality development and structure. Horney acknowledged that “the present knowledge of the extent and nature of cultural impact upon personality” was not available to Freud when he developed his theories (Horney, 1939, p. 168). According to Paris, Horney’s shift in stance reflected the impact of such contemporary writers as Erich Fromm, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Alfred Adler, and Harry Stack Sullivan (Paris, 1994, p. 102). Horney stated: “One criteria we apply in designating a person as neurotic is whether his mode of living coincides with any of the recognized behavior patterns of our time” (Horney, 1939, p. 14). Using anthropological data, Horney clearly demonstrated that what was normal within one culture could be construed as abnormal, even deviant, within another cultural environment. Horney (1939) delineated her active approach to the therapeutic session, separating herself further from the Freudian model of psychoanalysis:

My view is that the analyst should deliberately conduct the analysis....I would not hesitate to interfere most actively...Of course the analyst takes more risk and more responsibility this way. Responsibility, however, rests on the analyst anyhow, and the risk of making the wrong suggestion...is...less than the risk entailed in non-interference. When I feel uncertain about a suggestion made to the patient I point out its tentative character. If then my suggestion is not to the point, the fact that the patient feels that I too am searching for a solution may elicit his active collaboration in correcting or qualifying my suggestion. (Horney, 1939, pp. 286- 287)

Note the similarities between Horney’s views and those of Ferenczi in this statement. Ferenczi urged the analyst to take an active, involved stance in the therapeutic interaction, and also discussed the question of being wrong in his interpretations. And both Ferenczi and Horney sought the active collaboration of the patient: this viewpoint was different from that of the Freudians, and was to be celebrated later by the humanistic psychologists. Horney also presented ideas that were reminiscent of Ferenczi’s ‘Elasticity Paper’ (Ferenczi, 1928).

Horney’s ideas also recall another earlier book, *The Development of Psychoanalysis* (1923), which was written by Ferenczi and Otto Rank. Rank and Ferenczi were offering revisions of Freudian psychoanalytic techniques: the authors “specified the errors that might result from Freud’s analytic techniques, and indicated how to avoid them” (Rachman, 1997, p. 194).

Horney made significant contributions to psychoanalytic theory. She was one of the great analytic thinkers, living and writing as she did in both Europe and America between 1885 and 1952. Horney’s work was to become an important influence upon the humanistic psychologists.

Another influence on humanistic psychology, Erich Fromm, defies classification. Was he a sociologist, a social psychologist, a Marxist, or a politically oriented psychotherapist? I will let him speak for himself, since Fromm believed that he was distinguished from Horney and Sullivan by his focus upon “a dynamic analysis of the economic, political, and psychological forces that form the basis of society” (Fromm, 1970, p. 21).

Fromm was acquainted with Ferenczi through Ferenczi's student, Izette deForest, who was a supervisor of Andras Angyal, a mutual friend. Fromm made a valiant attempt to clarify Ferenczi's importance by discussing Freud's attempt to suppress Ferenczi. (Rachman, 1997) The most drastic example of Freud's intolerance and authoritarianism can be found in his relationship to Ferenczi. Ferenczi, who for many years had been the most loyal, unpretentious pupil and friend...suggested a certain change in technique, away from the completely impersonal and mirror-like attitude which Freud had proposed, to a human and loving attitude toward the patient. (Fromm, 1959, p. 63)

When Fromm (1970) discussed the fact that all infants (male and female) are intensely tied to their mothers, long before the construct of the "Oedipus complex" had become accepted as a fact, he stated "A few of the more innovative and bold psychoanalysts like Ferenczi saw and mentioned this tie when describing their clinical observations, but when they wrote about theory, they repeated Freud's formulations" (Fromm, 1970, p. 9).

Fromm was disappointed, as was Clara Thompson, that Ferenczi was not able to criticize Freud directly, or break away to form his own orientation. Apparently, Ferenczi's need for Freud's approval interfered with the development of his autonomy. Fromm (1970) stated that he believed that the main point in this crisis between Freud and Ferenczi dealt with an attitude towards authority:

Freud had withdrawn his radical critique of the parents...[and] had adopted a position in favor of authority...and that he [Freud] reacted violently when reminded of the position he had given up...his betrayal of the child. (Fromm, 1970, p. 44)

Fromm made contributions to four co-founders of humanistic psychology, Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, Carl Rogers, and James Bugental. *Escape from Freedom* (1994), originally published in 1941, was a remarkable book to read for the first time (which I did at Bennington College in the 1950s). Fromm differentiated his ideas from Freud, linking himself to Horney and Sullivan. In *Man for Himself* (1947), Fromm discussed humanistic ethics at great length, potentially offering advice to the humanistic psychologists.

"It might seem that the psychoanalyst, who is in the position of observing the tenacity and stubbornness of irrational strivings, would take a pessimistic view...I must confess that...I have become increasingly impressed by ...the strength of the strivings for happiness and health." (Fromm, 1947, p. x)

It was surprising to discover that Fromm made no direct reference to Ferenczi's work in this book. In my view, Ferenczi was the psychoanalyst who had the most faith in the positive abilities of his patients: he believed in their ability to know their truth, to speak this truth, and to lead the therapist to the correct pathways in the healing process. Although Fromm did not directly acknowledge any of Ferenczi's ideas on this subject, *Man for Himself* (1947) did open the door for a further exploration of the positive ideas and values that were to be discussed by the humanistic psychologists.

Fromm's *The Sane Society* (1955) presented an exciting challenge to my thinking in the 1950s, and I utilized it extensively in my Bennington College thesis, "Cultural Concepts of Abnormality." In the introduction, Fromm described this book as a continuation of *Escape From Freedom* and *Man For Himself*. In rereading this book, I discovered that although Fromm continued to challenge Freud's ideas, Harry Stack Sullivan was the only other psychoanalytic thinker quoted by Fromm. Ferenczi's name was conspicuously absent from *The Sane Society*.

However, Fromm held Ferenczi's work in the highest esteem. He believed and stated in 1959 (*Sigmund Freud's Mission: An Analysis of His Personality and Influence*), when most analysts were either silent or derogative of Ferenczi's ideas, that "The Confusion of Tongues" paper was one of the greatest papers in psychoanalysis. Therefore, we must assume that Fromm was indirectly influenced by Ferenczi, through Thompson, Izette deForest, and possibly Andras Angyal (Fromm, 1959, Rachman, 1997).

Izette deForest and Andras Angyal both served to transmit the ideas of Sándor Ferenczi to the generations that followed them, as a part of an American humanistic tradition. DeForest was an analyst and student of Ferenczi. Through her personal and professional relationship with Ferenczi, she became, along with Clara Thompson and Erich Fromm, the American analysts who kept his work alive during the 1940s-1970s (Rachman, 1997). DeForest was especially astute in presenting Ferenczi's views on countertransference.

[Ferenczi's] theory brought to the fore the significance of the countertransference. It stressed that it is the most essential tool of the therapist: one that must arise from his innate temperament, and . . . is solely concerned with the patient's recovery of emotional health. . . . The essential characteristic of the countertransference is one of tenderness. . . . He [the analyst] offers a setting of security and warmth, in which the patient by means of his varying expressions in transference exposes the unsolved problems of his infancy.

Psychotherapy must offer as its primary gift the needed parental substitute. This demands an embracing atmosphere of loving-kindness. It demands no less than the honest expression of the psychotherapist's attitudes towards the patient's transference productions. (deForest, 1954, pp. 122-123)

In this statement, deForest presented two of Ferenczi's most important contributions to psychotherapy. The first concept is that of the importance of utilizing the countertransference within the therapeutic session to assist the client in growing towards a new level of maturity.

When deForest spoke of an embracing atmosphere of loving kindness, she was reflecting another of Ferenczi's gift to the psychotherapeutic process: the therapist must be warmly engaged, and empathically involved with the client. In addition, deForest challenged the therapist to be an evolving personality:

If the restoration of personal integrity and self-control gained from this restored integrity are essential goals of psychotherapy, must not the therapist . . . in his own maturing process have reached these goals. . . . They are the professional means of expression of his spontaneous and self-disciplined nature, which in turn is devoted to expressing itself in . . . precept and example, teaching and living, converge and merge indistinguishably in the gifted healing personality. (deForest, 1954, p. 187)

This challenge is intriguing; it is a reflection of Ferenczi's ideas about the role and the function of the therapist. Ferenczi advocated that the therapist possess an interpersonal and emotional attitude of tenderness, an emotional ambiance, where parental and personal caring could create a healing environment. DeForest stressed the need for the therapist to function as a role model within this specific healing environment.

DeForest's ideas seem related to those of Carl Rogers, who defined the characteristics of a healing relationship in his book, *On Becoming A Person* (1961). The lineage of these ideas becomes increasingly clear: Sándor Ferenczi analyzed Izette deForest, who later worked closely with Andras Angyal, who became closely connected with Abraham Maslow, of the co-founders of humanistic psychology.

Andras Angyal was involved in the founding of the American Association of Humanistic Psychology (Corsini, 1994), and was one of the original members of the editorial board of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* (deCarvalho, 1991).

A discussion of Angyal's therapeutic behavior by Mark Stern reveals his Ferenczian dimensions:

Angyal's therapeutic format was transformative and reconstructive. As a therapist he remained consummately respectful, if not reverential of the emergences of all experience. Experiences on all levels were seen to be foundational to recovery. His therapeutic principles provided a constant amplification of the personal perspective. Therapeutic confrontations were managed sensitively and skillfully. He recommended abiding with the patient's experience since it represents all that he or she has. (Stern, 1994, p. 248)

Angyal formed a bridge between the generations of therapists. Stern was identifying Angyal's principles, which were Ferenczian concepts: Angyal demonstrated empathic behaviors; he had respect for all of the patient's experiences, on whatever level they occurred; he dealt with the present realities of the patient's life, and he was tactful in handling the requisite therapeutic confrontations.

Stern (1994) revealed that "Angyal's belief in the potential of the human will made him much admired by Abraham Maslow. They became friends in the mid to late 1940s" (p. 251). Stern (1994) continued to supply the historical linkage I had sought: "Maslow, intrigued by his friend's holistic paradigm, helped sponsor the Angyal Seminar at Brandeis University. Similar seminars were given at Harvard, the notes from which served as the background of his posthumous text, *Neurosis and Treatment: A Holistic Theory* (1965)", (Stern, 1994, p. 252). notes.

Angyal's intriguing book, currently out of print, could only be located at the William Alanson White Institute Library in New York City. The book's introduction was written by Abraham Maslow. "He [Angyal] acknowledged having learned much from psychoanalysis and from Harry Stack Sullivan; his approach to therapy was congenial with that of the theorists whom Maslow described as the 'third force' in psychology

and, in some points, with that of the existentialists.’ ( Maslow in Angyal, 1965, p. xi).

Let us hear Andras Angyal speak for himself, because he did so with eloquence:

A therapist who holds the conviction that the patient is the one who knows the truth about himself, and with help will be able to find it...his impression will take full account of the patient’s observations; His assessment of the evidence will be shared with the patient...Such behavior will convey to the patient... the therapist’s confidence that the confusing and contradictory picture can be disentangled through their common effort. (Angyal, 1965, p. 219)

This paragraph reflects two of Ferenczi’s most important contributions to psychotherapeutic theory. The first is that the client knows the truth about himself or herself, and need only be assisted to discover the truth. The second of Ferenczi’s concepts reflected here is that any therapeutic process must become a joint venture, involving two participants, therapist and client.

In fact, “many observations bear out the fact that in some regard the participants of the therapeutic situation actually function as one unit” (Angyal, 1965, p. 301).

Angyal revealed another aspect of his Ferenczian beliefs, when he discussed the importance of a therapist acknowledging his mistakes in interpretation. He recalled a patient stating “When you try to accept yourself, it is helpful that your analyst accepts you with all your faults, but it is so much more convincing if you find that he can accept himself and his own shortcomings” (Angyal, 1965, p. 310). This statement by Angyal recalled an earlier quote from Ferenczi, in which the patient corrected him (Ferenczi) and was then acknowledged as being correct. We observe an increasing validation of the strengths of the client, and an acceptance of errors by the therapist. These elements serve to make the therapeutic encounter more democratic. Perhaps it was Andras Angyal who formed the most visible bridge between the neo-Freudian era and the humanistic psychologists..

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF SANDOR FERENCZI TO THE HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGISTS**

Sándor Ferenczi’s ideas were passed to the humanistic psychologists in a less direct manner. Rachman (1997) also indicated that the works of Ferenczi were rarely featured in analytic training institutes. According to Rachman (1997), “The attempts to suppress and censor Ferenczi’s work must be considered to be successful for more than a forty-year period (1932-1976)” (p. 410). The one exception within this time frame occurred between the years of 1946 to 1958 , when Clara Thompson was the director of the William Alanson White Institute.

One must also note that the three volumes of Ferenczi’s major papers were all printed in English for the first time in 1950. This lack of access to Ferenczi’s work would certainly be a contributing factor to the lack of recognition by the humanistic psychologists.

Although Rachman made a good point about the suppression of Ferenczi’s ideas, the transmission of these ideas faced another equally important hurdle. Ferenczi was first and foremost a clinician: he took the Freudian concepts of psychoanalysis and applied them in his clinical practice. The primary focus of Ferenczi’s diaries was upon technique, and upon his revisions of Freudian concepts. One might expect that Ferenczi’s primary contribution to the humanistic psychologists was to be in the area of therapeutic style, and in the techniques of psychotherapy. I think that this is partially true. Ferenczi demonstrated a radically different attitude towards his patients, that of loving acceptance, acknowledging his patients’ innate wisdom, and he sought to engage in a more collaborative form of psychotherapy.

Andre Haynal, (1989) quoted Ferenczi regarding Freud’s negative view of patients: “I cannot help but recall certain remarks Freud made in my presence, obviously relying upon my discretion: “Patients are nothing but riffraff. The only useful purposes they serve are to help us earn a living, and to provide learning material. In any case, we cannot help them.” (Haynal, 1989, p. 32) This amazing quotation, if it is accurate, revealed Freud’s disdain and condescension towards his patients. It also reflected some aspects of analytic role modeling. Ferenczi’s attitude was diametrically opposed to this viewpoint.

I think that one of humanistic psychology’s greatest contributions to the field was a profound belief in the positive aspects of human nature. Abraham Maslow, who was one of the most positive thinkers of the humanistic tradition, wrote: “Psychology ought to be more positive and less negative. It should have higher

ceilings and not be afraid of the loftier possibilities of the human being...Happiness is as real as unhappiness; gratification is as real as frustration; love is as real as hostility. (Maslow, 1965, p. 27)

Maslow's positive outlook was further explicated in several publications (Maslow, 1968, 1971). He stated that the primary source of personality disorder "is seen as anything short of growth, or of self-actualization, or of full humanness" (Maslow, 1968, p. 193). Maslow (1971) also elucidated his views about self-actualization, and many of his ideas resemble Horney's views about self-realization.

Charlotte Bühler (1972) pointed out this important connection: "Among humanistic psychologists, the most important widespread theory is that of the goal of self actualization, first suggested by Karen Horney (1950),...or self actualization, suggested by Abraham Maslow (1954.)" (p. 45) Both Horney and Maslow wrote about the vast potential for growth that was inherently available to each individual. They both stressed the need to accept the real self, if a person was to develop fully. They also agreed that this essential nature could be influenced positively (as well as negatively) by family, culture, environment, and educational experiences. I think that Ferenczi's positive outlook and view of his patients (as opposed to Freud's viewpoint) was amply reflected in the writings of Karen Horney. These ideas were then expanded upon and enlarged by Abraham Maslow.

Rollo May was another outstanding member of the first generation of humanistic psychologists. May studied at the William Alanson White Institute, and became a training analyst there (Schneider & May, 1995). Although I have scoured the indices of May's texts, I was unable to locate a reference to Ferenczi. Yet many of May's ideas appear to proceed directly from Ferenczi's. May (1939) gave credit to some of his earliest teachers; stating that his "contact with [Alfred] Adler turned out to be surprisingly useful, as in those days Freud, Jung, Rank, and other psychotherapists were not taught in universities and were almost unknown in this country" (p. 7). May also discussed some of his early ideas that were to become significant to the development of humanistic psychology:

It is the uniqueness of each person that we...seek to preserve...The mistakes in life occur when the individual tries to act some other role than his own...[Otto] Rank explains it as the aim of his method: To say it in one word, the aim is self development; this is, the person is to develop himself into that which he is. (May, 1939, pp. 54-55)

May had quoted from Rank's book, *Truth and Reality*, which was translated and printed in 1936. However, these ideas had been explicated earlier by Rank and Ferenczi in 1925. When May (1939) thus reflected Rank's ideas on the development of the self, he was presenting an idea that would be reflected by Horney (1950), and then by Maslow (1954).

May was traditionally generous in his attributions to the neo-Freudians, acknowledging Karen Horney (1937) for many of her ideas about the nature of anxiety. May (1950) elaborated upon and expanded Horney's (1937) concepts, and referred to Sullivan (1940) for his contributions to the development of anxiety theory.

May's (1939) book contained a remarkable chapter, "Empathy – The Key to the Counseling Process," (pp. 75-97). Ferenczi first wrote about empathy in 1928 (p. 89). This particular concept has been discussed as an essential part of the psychotherapeutic process: *Empathy Reconsidered* by Bohart and Greenberg (1997) reaffirms this idea. Yet Rollo May (1939) gave credit in this chapter on empathy to the work of Adler and Jung: both of the books May cited in his bibliography were available in print in the 1920s and 1930s.

In *The Discovery of Being* (1983), May included a chapter on the therapeutic techniques of existential psychotherapy. He emphasized the importance of presence:

By this we mean that the relationship of the therapist and patient is taken as a real one, the therapist being not merely a shadowy reflector but an alive human being who happens...to be concerned...with understanding and experiencing as far as possible the being of the patient (p. 156). This concept might have evolved from Ferenczi's ideas. However, we have ample evidence of Rollo May's generosity in attributing his inspirational sources to the psychoanalytic pioneers, and to the neo-Freudians. I must conclude that May did not think that he had been directly influenced by the writings of Ferenczi.

Carl Rogers has been a challenge to those of us who seek to explore the transmission of ideas through the generations. Rachman (1997) stated:

Rogers' writing within the humanistic psychotherapy tradition, pioneered the introduction of empathy

as one of the essential conditions of psychotherapy. ...Rogers' work built on the foundations of Ferenczi and Rank's formulation for a focus upon the emotional experiential...component in psychotherapy. It also adhered to Ferenczi's belief that the analysand's communication contains an essential truth. (pp. 227-228)

Rogers (1951) spoke at length about the evolution of his own ideas:

In this broadening stream of interest in and development of psychotherapeutic procedures, non-directive or client-centered counseling has had its growth. It is a product of its time and its cultural setting... Though it has developed along somewhat different paths than the psychotherapeutic views of Horney and Sullivan,... yet there are many threads of interconnection with these modern formulations of psychoanalytic thinking. (p. 4)

Rogers (1942) had originally acknowledged Otto Rank and the Philadelphia School. By 1951, Rogers was more specific about the influence of Rank upon the development of his ideas:

A...therapeutic approach, stemming directly from the work of Otto Rank (work which had also influenced the present writer) was being practiced by social workers, psychiatrists, and psychologists who received their training in the Philadelphia area under such social workers as Jessie Taft [translator of Otto Rank's work], Frederick Allen, and Virginia Robinson. (p. 10)

There is a final chapter in Rogers' (1951) book that acknowledges other influences upon Rogers' ideas. "The process of theory building in regard to personality has gone on apace,...and a number of contributions have enriched our thinking" (p. 481). When Rogers discussed the concept of self-actualization, he acknowledged Andras Angyal's *Foundations for a Science of Personality* (1941), and quoted from it extensively. Angyal was previously discussed as an important carrier of Ferenczi's ideas into the next generation, that of the humanistic psychologists.

Therefore, I must take note of Carl Rogers' exposure to the ideas of Otto Rank (Ferenczi & Rank, 1923), and those of Andras Angyal (1941, 1965). Even if Rogers did not formally acknowledge the ideas of Ferenczi, he certainly carried these ideas forward, placing them within the framework of humanistic psychology.

James Bugental is the final member of the four co-founders of humanistic psychology whose work will be reviewed here. He is currently 86 years old, still writing and teaching his training groups for psychotherapists. His many books offer no direct of Sándor Ferenczi. However, if Maslow reflected Ferenczi's positive outlook on humanity, and if Rogers could find support for his client-centered approach in the writings of Ferenczi's colleagues and advocates, perhaps Bugental reflects the meticulous concern for the therapeutic process that was so typically Ferenczian.

Bugental (1965) wrestled with the question of who elects to become a therapist, and questioned why these choices were made. Bugental openly acknowledged his debt to the neo-Freudians, such as Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, Karen Horney, and Erich Fromm, in addition to his debt to Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, and Carl Rogers.

In a discussion of the Freudian concept of the therapist functioning as a blank screen, Bugental (1965) noted how these ideas had evolved into the work of May and Rogers (p. 71). Bugental did not always agree with Rogers, but he did acknowledge him frequently. It was Ferenczi and Rank (1923) who first challenged the therapeutic blank screen, stressing the need for an enhanced degree of communication between the participants.

On November 23, 1996, I interviewed Dr. Bugental by telephone. He discussed his five consultation groups for practicing therapists, and how the participants present their cases for supervision. Bugental said: "I help the therapist explore his or her feelings, thoughts, fantasies; maybe we do some role playing games. Then I hardly need to say, "Do this, or do that," because the therapist has such an enlarged, empathic view of the client. (Bugental, Personal communication, November 23, 1996) I suspect that Ferenczi would have agreed that Bugental's supervision groups might facilitate a more responsive connection between the therapist and the client.

Bugental has continued to write at length about his commitment to psychotherapy, and his level of involvement within the process itself.

I've already described how necessary it is to feel a genuine involvement with my client's struggle...The

way to do this is to be as present and caring for my client's emergence as is genuine. And in being so...I am modeling a way of regarding that person's experience and life. More than one client has told me, "I could feel your caring so surely that I decided maybe I could care about myself too." (Bugental, 1978, p. 114)

Both Izette deForest (1954) and Andras Angyal (1965) discussed the issue of the therapist's countertransference feelings towards the client, and had stressed importance of this connection. Mark Stern (1994) validated this linkage as an essential part of his personal psychotherapeutic process.

Bugental (1987) offers an essential credo for practicing psychotherapists:

The art of psychotherapy is an incremental one. The artist-therapist goes through continual cycles:...There is no end point, no final complete mastery. Freud and Jung both continually changed and extended their observations until death: their disciples continue that process....In summary, the key point is that mastery of the art of therapy is a continually evolving process rather than an end state, a matter of accepting...the constant challenge to move past where one is and to explore where one is becoming. (p. 266)

Perhaps Bugental's statement embodies the most essential message from Ferenczi: the theory and practice of psychotherapy must continue to evolve, rather than remain static and unchanging.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This article has discussed the transmission of Sándor Ferenczi's innovative ideas to the two generations of psychotherapists that followed him. Specific attention has been focused upon Andras Angyal, Izette deForest, Erich Fromm, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, Karen Horney, Harry Stack Sullivan, and Clara Thompson. All of these neo-Freudians had important connections to Ferenczi, and his ideas effected them directly. Four co-founders of humanistic psychology (Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, Carl Rogers and James Bugental) acknowledged the impact of the neo-Freudians' ideas upon their work, as well as the work of the pioneers of psychotherapy.

However, not one member of this third generation acknowledged Ferenczi's work directly. Only Rogers, in his acknowledgment of Otto Rank (who had collaborated with Ferenczi), made a connection to the work of Ferenczi. Despite this lack of a direct link, Ferenczi's ideas about therapeutic style, the techniques of psychotherapy, his attitude of loving acceptance, his acknowledgement of his patients' innate wisdom, and his goal of collaborative psychotherapy, became some of the basic principles of humanistic psychology.

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