

UNCONSCIOUS PERCEPTION IN THE STORY OF PSYCHOANALYSIS: A VIGNETTE.

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... like a text, human action is an open work, the meaning of which is “in suspense”. (Paul Ricoeur)

INTRODUCTION

During the course of 1932, shortly before his death, Ferenczi (1933, 1939, 1988) developed the thesis that psychoanalytic patients represent in symbolic form accurate unconscious perceptions of the analytic situation itself (Smith 1991; Myers 1996). This ran counter to psychoanalytic orthodoxy. In both Freud's (1900) first model of the mind, and his (1923) revised meta psychology, perception had been decisively linked to consciousness. Despite that, the concept of unconscious perceptiveness had been intermittently foreshadowed within psychoanalysis. In 1913, Freud himself expressed the conviction that ‘... psychoanalysis has shown us that everyone possesses in his unconscious mental activity an apparatus which enables him to interpret other people's reactions, that is, to undo the distortions which other people have imposed on the expression of their feelings.’ (Freud 1912-13: 159).

However, the perspective that Ferenczi set out, notably in his paper at the 12th congress of the International Psychoanalytical Association in 1932, broke new ground. He took the view (Ferenczi 1933) that patients expressed symbolically valid unconscious criticisms of both the analyst and of their conduct of the analysis. He believed that analysts must discern, and learn from, their patients' latent insights. These findings as well as other aspects of the paper were controversial. It was 16 years before an English translation was published and several decades before psychoanalysts once more pursued similar hypotheses (Searles 1961, 1972, 1975; Langs 1973, 1975a, b). Langs' and Searles' clinical findings extended Ferenczi's work in two key ways. Firstly they found (Searles 1961; Langs 1985) that patients both in psychoanalysis and in psychotherapy typically symbolize aspects of the therapy through behavior outside as well as inside their therapy sessions, and that this may result in iatrogenic symptoms.

Secondly, Langs found that the ‘frame’ of the therapeutic relationship was a primary determinant of patients' symbolic representations of the therapeutic situation. Freud's original development of psychoanalysis had entailed the establishment of ground rules or boundaries that delineated the nature of the analytic situation. This is most evident in his technical papers (Freud 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1919). Milner (1952) referred to the temporal and spatial aspects of these boundaries as the ‘frame’ of psychoanalysis. Bleger (1967) used the same term more widely to refer to the analytic boundary-constellation as a whole, in particular to the demarcation of the role of the analyst himself. Freud had argued (albeit equivocally) for ‘neutrality’ in the sense of respect for patients' individuality and autonomy, ‘anonymity’ in the sense of avoiding deliberate self-revelation, and ‘abstinence’ which entailed maintaining an analytic role uncontaminated by other forms of relationship or ‘gratifications’ to the patient. His reasoning had included consideration of the remit of psychoanalysis, of efficacy, and of ethics. Langs (1975b, 1978) pointed to an alternative foundation for such aspects of the frame both in psychoanalysis and in psychotherapy more generally. He asserted that patients' symbolic representations revealed that they unconsciously perceived deviations from neutrality, anonymity and an uncontaminated therapeutic relationship as negative and harmful, even when, on a conscious level, they welcomed these deviations.

In contrast, Ferenczi (1933, 1988) did not apparently consider the possibility that alterations in the frame of his analyses played a major part in his patients' unconscious perceptions and symbolic representations of the analytic situation, even though the data he recorded lends weight to this hypothesis (Myers 1994, 1996). One factor in this may have been the dominant part such alterations played in his work during the early 1930s (ibid.). Another factor may have been an aversion to the implications such a perspective could have had when applied to his own multiply contaminated formal and informal analysis with Freud. This article sets out to begin an exploration of these possible implications. Ferenczi's relationships with Elma Palos and Elizabeth Severn are placed in the context of his on-going quasi-analytic relationship with Freud. Self-analytical pieces, written at the time that a more formal analysis was proposed, and at the time of its inception, are also examined.

FERENCZI AND FREUD

Sandor Ferenczi (1873-1933) had met Freud in February 1908 (FF I)¹. Later that same year in April, at the first psychoanalytic congress which was held in Salzburg, Freud invited Ferenczi to join his family on their summer holiday (ibid.). Balint (1949) wrote that, within a few months, Ferenczi had become perhaps Freud's closest friend. They were to spend many holidays together, and, between 1908 and Ferenczi's death from pernicious anaemia in 1933, exchanged more than a thousand letters (Jones 1955). But this correspondence (FF I, FF II) also reveals a multi-faceted intimacy. They were not only friends, but also colleagues, teacher and pupil, and psychoanalyst and patient. By March of 1908, Ferenczi was practicing psychoanalysis and also lecturing to other physicians on the subject (FF 1). In 1910 Ferenczi left general medical practice to devote more of his time to psychoanalysis (Haynal 1988). During three periods, once in 1914 and twice in 1916, he was formally analyzed by Freud (Dupont 1994; FF II). Ferenczi himself, describing their relationship, wrote in a letter to Freud dated 17 January 1930:

What happens in the relationship between you and me (at least in me) is an entanglement of various conflicts of emotions and positions. At first you were my revered mentor and unattainable model, for whom I nourished the feelings of a pupil - always somewhat mixed, as we know. Then you became my analyst ... (Dupont 1988: 13)

Two earlier letters from Ferenczi to Freud indicate that from Ferenczi's point of view at least, his analytic treatment by Freud began on an informal basis well before his formal analysis. In a letter dated 17 March 1911 Ferenczi wrote:

You see, it is *literally* true: you are not only the discoverer of new psychological facts but also the *physician* who treats us physicians. As such you have to bear all the burdens of transference and resistance. It is, of course, unpleasant when you have to deal with incurable or not easily accessible physicians (e.g., an infantile-perverse Stekel and a paranoid Adler). In comparison to them, even I must qualify as quite a simple "case"; I am in approximately the same stage as the patient who came to see me after a year's hiatus in order to free herself from the last remnant of her illness, her transference to me. I think I have pretty well freed this patient - as well as myself - from this neurotic character trait (which you got to see in Sicily last summer). (FF I: 205)

This letter was written in the wake of Adler and Stekel's resignation as president and vice-president respectively of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. At the end of the following year there was a somewhat similar backdrop to the correspondence between Freud and Ferenczi: the rift between Jung and Freud had developed. On 18 December 1912 Jung wrote to Freud and accused him of treating his pupils like patients (Freud & Jung 1974). Freud included Jung's letter, together with a draft reply, as an enclosure with his next letter to Ferenczi. In Ferenczi's response, dated 26 December 1912, he wrote that Jung was 'uncommonly impudent' (FF I: 362). Ferenczi described appreciatively Freud's treatment of his followers:

Everyone must be able to tolerate an authority over himself from whom he accepts analytic correction. You are probably the only one who can permit himself to do without an analyst But what is valid for you is not valid for the rest of us [including Jung] . . . [We] have to consider ourselves fortunate if you help us to control our affects in the only effective, i.e., analytically legitimate way, and give us hints that call our attention to the weak points of our psychic organization. - I, too, went through a period of rebellion against your "treatment." Now I have become insightful and find that you were right in everything, and that you could have done me no other service than allowing yourself, in my "education," to be guided not always by feeling but often by analytic insight. (ibid.)

In this same letter Ferenczi went on to suggest, for the first time in their published correspondence, that he have formal analytic sessions with Freud.

It seems certain, from other similar allusions in Ferenczi's letters to Freud, that his reference to a former period of rebellion against Freud's 'treatment' in the letter above (like the reference to Sicily in his letter of 17 March 1911) concerns the period surrounding an incident which took place in Palermo during Freud and Ferenczi's four week holiday together in August 1910². So, from Ferenczi's perspective, informal analytic treatment by Freud had begun by then. From an examination of their correspondence, Dupont (1988) affirmed the view that Freud's analysis of Ferenczi could not be limited to the periods of formal analysis. It appeared to her that a quasi-analytic relationship spanned the entire period of Ferenczi's acquaintance with Freud. Later she modified this opinion, writing that '[only] some periods are strongly marked by an analytic character, such as the years 1911 and 1912, around 1924, or the last years of Ferenczi's life' (Dupont 1994: 301).

Alongside his role as 'physician', Freud was established in at least three other roles simultaneously for Ferenczi: teacher, friend, and colleague within the International Psycho-Analytical Association. Each of these roles would have inevitably contaminated the analytic relationship and obviated the possibility of either anonymity or neutrality on Freud's part. On a conscious level Ferenczi seems to have had no qualms about this apparently flawed choice of physician. But his later work and its further development by Langs, might lead us to ask if the multifaceted contamination evoked latent, symbolically represented criticism.

During the initial period that Dupont picked out as strongly marked by an analytic character, 1911-1912, Ferenczi, in his correspondence with Freud, was preoccupied by a sequence of events apparently far removed from their own entangled relationship: the unfolding story of his relations with Elma Palos, daughter of his long-standing companion Gizella.

FERENCZI AND THE PALOS FAMILY

By the time he met Freud, Ferenczi had for some years had a relationship with Gizella Palos. A letter from Ferenczi to Freud dated 17 October 1916 suggests that their relationship as lovers had begun in 1900 (FF II). Gizella Palos, nee Altschul, (1863-1949) was at the time married to Geza Palos and they had two daughters, Elma (1887?-1972)³ and Magda. According to Elma in her later years, Geza tolerated Gizella's affair with Ferenczi (Dupont 1982). In a letter to Freud dated 8 November 1909, Ferenczi described a past letter from himself to Gizella. He called it 'a letter that I wrote many years ago (1905) to *my younger brother's present mother-in-law* (about whom I have already told you much)' (FF I: 76). This is a reference to another tie which had developed between Ferenczi and the Palos family; Ferenczi's brother Lajos, six years his junior, had married Magda, Gizella's younger daughter. The description of Gizella as Lajos' 'present' mother-in-law suggests that the marriage took place sometime between 1905 and 1909.

Letters written in 1910 and 1911 by Ferenczi to Freud record his concern for Elma's welfare, both because of a series of dental operations she underwent in this period and in connection with her relationships with men. Then, on 14 July 1911, Ferenczi reported to Freud that he had decided to take Elma into psychoanalytic treatment: 'Frau G. thanks you for the greeting and returns it cordially. Just think, I decided to take her daughter (Elma) into psychoanalytic treatment; the situation [unspecified in the correspondence], you see, was becoming unbearable. For the moment, the thing is working, and the effect is favorable' (FF I: 234)⁴. But, a few months

later, Ferenczi fell in love with Elma. In a letter dated 14 November 1911, Ferenczi wrote to Freud that he had had fantasies about marrying Elma and, in a letter dated 3 December 1911, Ferenczi wrote:

Things are proceeding more rapidly than I imagined they would. I was not able to maintain the cool detachment of the analyst with regard to Elma, and I laid myself bare, which then led to a kind of closeness which I can no longer put forth as the benevolence of the physician or of the fatherly friend ... now, to all appearances, she has won my heart. (FF I: 256)

At this stage Ferenczi remained undecided about his choice of partner, torn between Gizella and Elma. However, later in December, Ferenczi and Elma decided to marry.

Then, in the two days between 30 December 1911 and 1 January 1912, Ferenczi changed his mind and, over the ensuing months, the vacillation in his feelings between Elma and Gizella began again. In his letter to Freud dated 1 January 1912, Ferenczi wrote 'I had to recognize that the issue here should be one not of marriage but of the treatment of an illness' (FF I: 263). He requested that Freud take Elma into analysis.⁵ Elma had consented to this 'After many bitter tears' (ibid.). Freud agreed, and Elma began a second period of analysis, from January until the beginning of April 1912, this time with Freud as analyst. Ferenczi and Elma, still often wracked by love for one another, were to renew their analytic relationship at the end of April. The Freud-Ferenczi correspondence reveals that, during these months, both Ferenczi and Freud consistently betrayed Elma's private and professional confidences.

At the beginning of August 1912, Ferenczi finally ended both his analysis of Elma and her hopes that they would marry. In a letter to Freud dated 8 August 1912 he wrote 'I did this with somnambulistic certainty, paying no heed to the painful uproar inside me' (FF I: 319). In a poignant sequel to this ending, Ferenczi then mistakenly pre-dated his subsequent two letters to Freud; the first by a month and the second by a year.

RELATIONSHIP IN CONTEXT

Taken as a whole, Ferenczi's multi-faceted relationship with Elma was unusual, even bizarre. In 1911, Ferenczi was Elma's prospective step-father, a 'fatherly friend.' He was also her brother-in-law. He then made himself her analyst in July 1911. By December they had, in addition, a love-relationship. Aspects of this situation were, by themselves, not so exceptional. Psychoanalysts had been known to analyze their close adult relatives, including their children. Freud, in fact, expressed no surprise at Ferenczi's decision to analyze Elma. On 20 July 1911 he replied to news of the start of the analysis:

I greet you and Frau Gisela [sic] cordially and wish you much practical success in the new enterprise with Fraulein Elma, but, of course, I fear that it will go well up to a certain point and then not at all. While you're at it, don't sacrifice too many of your secrets out of an excess of kindness. (FF I: 235)

By 1918, Freud himself had begun an analysis of his own daughter, Anna (Roazen 1975). Sexual relationships between analysts and their patients have also been well-documented. We know that in 1908 Jung had begun a sexual relationship with one of his patients, Sabina Spielrein (Carotenuto 1984). Freud (1915) felt it necessary to explicitly counsel physicians against entering sexual relationships with analytic patients despite the longstanding tenets of the Hippocratic oath. What made Ferenczi's relationship with Elma, as it evolved in 1911, exceptional was that it included both these elements and more, so that the sexual aspect violated their analyst-patient relationship, and bordered on incest, at one and the same time.

However, there are thematic similarities which suggest that one unconscious determinant of Ferenczi's seemingly bizarre behaviour with Elma might be a latent perception of his own multi-faceted relationship with Freud. There is a similarity in the 'entanglement' of many different relationships, both positions of

power (prospective step-father, analyst) as well as positions of equality (lover, brother-in-law), between two people, reminiscent of Freud's relationship with Ferenczi. Indeed, the parallel is remarkable; Freud likewise held two positions of power (teacher, analyst) and two positions of relative equality (friend, colleague within the International Psycho-Analytical Association) in relation to Ferenczi. The developing nature of Ferenczi's relationship with Elma during 1911 could thus be interpreted as representing an unconscious perception by Ferenczi of the relationship that Freud had with him. If so, then this is a representation characterized by the violation of positions of trust; a picture of his relationship with Freud that on a conscious level seems to have been unavailable to Ferenczi. From another perspective, the vacillation which also characterized Ferenczi's dealings with Elma could perhaps be understood as an unconscious critique of Freud's alternation between roles in his relationship with Ferenczi.

Freud himself, from the December of 1911, played a major role in Ferenczi's relationships with Gizella and with her daughter Elma. Freud's interventions during this time with his patient/friend/colleague/pupil about his choice of partner were characterized by a veneer of neutrality masking a determination to influence Ferenczi in favour of Gizella (FF I). When Freud received Ferenczi's letter of 3 December 1911 about his love for Elma, he immediately wrote back instructing Ferenczi not to decide anything immediately and to visit Vienna. This Ferenczi did. Afterwards, on 17 December 1911, Freud wrote to Gizella:

Dear lady,

What I am writing to you today will remain completely between us. . . . He is turning away from the mother to the daughter and expects from me that I should recognize this trade as one that holds out a promise of happiness. In the process, the wounded woman will experience a blossoming of the beautiful consolation of being allowed to withdraw to the role of happy mother. And here my doubts begin, as well as those about your lucidity. You have shown me this daughter. I did not find that she could place herself alongside her mother The suspicion has to arise that to the man she will become a poor substitute for the mother (FF I: 259)

Years later, in another letter to Gizella dated 23 January 1917, Freud was to give, with disarming forthrightness, his own retrospective account of his approach to Ferenczi in these matters:

... it was an urgent wish on my part to see you united I have worked on the realization of this wish with the most varied means, directly and indirectly, in friendly intercourse and through analysis, carefully, so that my preambles would not produce recalcitrance in him, and with blunt demands, in order to bring my influence to bear. (FF II: 643)

In this context, themes of pressure, manipulation and duplicity, all of which emerged in Ferenczi's dealings with Elma during 1912, could be seen as furthering an unconscious depiction of Freud's behaviour with Ferenczi himself.

FORMAL ANALYSIS

I have already cited the part of Ferenczi's letter of 26 December 1912 in which he stated that he had been, in effect, informally analytically treated by Freud for years. In a later section of the same letter, Ferenczi went on to suggest a formal analysis:

Now on to myself. -I am also a case in need of treatment- but there has been undeniable progress to the extent that I am conscious of that fact. It was and is my intention, if you can grant me time (hours), to go into analysis with you – perhaps two weeks (maybe three), for now. (FF I: 362)

This suggestion was followed by a self-analytical passage. Ferenczi described some physical symptoms, suggested that these may have been ‘in large part neurotic’ (ibid.), and then, in support of this, described two dreams. He detailed his associations to the first of these dreams. In this first dream Ferenczi was attacked by a little black cat. Again and again it jumped up and he threw it harder and harder to the floor. Finally it smashed to bits, but a poisonous snake raised its head from the cat’s blood or entrails. There was a woman protecting herself from the snake. In some undefined way, Freud, Freud’s sister-in-law (Minna Bernays) and a four-poster bed in Italy played a role in the dream. As Ferenczi continued the letter to Freud, many of his associations to this dream took the form of narratives which have striking similarities to one another:

As a young medical student I examined my landlady’s pug in Vienna; the animal got an erection and rubbed his member on my hand. I was “astonished” at the strength of his sexual aggressiveness. (I must have been somewhat *aroused* at the time, because afterwards I *threw the animal to the floor* with excessive disgust.).

My sister Gisela, with whom I was caught by the cook at the age of about three (maybe even earlier) in mutual touching and (after having been reported to my mother!) threatened with a kitchen knife (obviously a threat of castration).

I envied a young (albeit a year older than I) playmate because of his bravery: his penis was larger, was “nice and brown” and had blue veins. When I was about five years old he tempted me into allowing him to put his penis into my mouth. I remember the feeling of disgust that that produced in me. (I was afraid he had urinated into my mouth.) I didn’t permit him a second time.

You once took a trip to Italy with your sister-in-law (*voyage de lit-a-lit*⁶) (naturally, only an infantile thought!)⁷

Once during the wine harvest all the guests, about forty people, had to stay overnight in two rooms and in the hayloft because a thunderstorm had made going home impossible ... I must have thought about how the ladies and gentlemen lay beside one another; I thought especially about a beautiful lady friend of my mother’s. My mother’s beautiful lady friends in general had to bear the brunt of all the suspicions that I spared my mother (ibid.)

These are stories of an illicit, sexual dimension being added to established relationships. In the context of Ferenczi’s suggestion that his analytic relationship with Freud be formalized, this narrative-constellation could be understood as conveying a latent perception of such an analysis as illicit and seductive. Themes of disgust and aggressiveness, also evident in the first three stories, may then elaborate this latent portrayal. The final tale, ‘My mother’s beautiful lady friends ... had to bear the brunt of the suspicions that I spared my mother,’ seems to capture something of the nature of Ferenczi’s letter itself which, on a manifest level, condemns Jung and extols Freud.

Plans were made for the formal analysis to take place in the spring of 1913. However these were subsequently cancelled so that Ferenczi could instead accept the invitation of his old friend Miksa Schächter to take a three week holiday in Corfu with him from March until April. On his return, Ferenczi suggested that the analytic treatment be rescheduled for the month of June. In Freud’s reply, dated 4 May 1913, it is evident that he had become reluctant to embark on this course:

If I could be of use to you, then everything else would take precedence over that. But I know that four or six weeks of analysis would be much too insufficient. For that reason something else comes into consideration, namely, my dearth of inclination to expose one of my indispensable helpers to the danger of personal estrangement brought about by the analysis. (FF I: 392)

Ferenczi responded on 12 May 1913, 'I am convinced that my analysis could only improve relations between us' (FF I: 394). On a conscious level, it seems that, while Freud had misgivings, Ferenczi welcomed the proposed formal analysis unreservedly. Following this interchange the possibility of booking analytic sessions is not mentioned in their correspondence for more than a year. Meanwhile, in the autumn of 1913, Elma Palos was engaged to an American, Hervé Laurvik.

Then, in the summer of 1914, against a backdrop of the outbreak of the first world war, Ferenczi once again raised the possibility of a formal analysis with Freud (FF II). That October it finally did commence. With his last letter prior to this, dated September 8, Ferenczi enclosed some self-analysis. It was disguised as an article about a dialogue between an imagined analyst, supposedly Ferenczi, and a patient. Ferenczi wrote to Freud 'You will also recognize yourself in it -in the person of the doctor who doesn't want to analyze me' (FF II: 504), so perhaps Freud was again reluctant or ambivalent about the proposal for formal analysis.

In the article, 'The dream of the occlusive pessary,' the patient (Ferenczi) had dreamt of stuffing an occlusive pessary into his urethra (his partner (Gizella) used such a pessary for contraception).

I am alarmed as I do so lest it might slip into the bladder from which it could only be removed by shedding blood... Supplement: in the dream I was aware that the elastic thing would spread itself [sic] in the bladder and then it would be impossible to get it out again. (Ferenczi 1915: 304-5).

In Ferenczi's self-analysis, he interpreted the dream as a condensation of various latent ideas. Among these were fear of infection, self-impregnation, the desire for a child, Ferenczi as intruder and as coward, and his mixed feelings towards Gizella and Elma. The link to Freud which Ferenczi had referred to in his letter was made by the imagined analyst: 'You [Ferenczi] mock at me [Freud] by showing by the unskillful introduction of the pessary how wrong it is to leave you alone and to consider you capable of being your own doctor' (ibid.: 310). Ferenczi's later work, as well as Langs' extension of it suggest alternative links. In the dream there are themes of the introduction and intrusion of a grossly inappropriate object. There is the danger of injury and irreversible damage. All of this could represent a valid perception of the invasive qualities of the analytic relationship with Freud, grossly contaminated and devoid of neutrality; a relationship shortly to 'spread itself' into formal sessions. Incidentally, the published article (ibid.) also suggests that Elma had just married Hervé Laurvik at this point, sometime between September 2, the date of Ferenczi's previous letter, and September 8 1914.

Ferenczi was to have three periods of intense analytic treatment with Freud. The first period appears to have lasted for about three weeks beginning on the 1st of October 1914 (FF II). It ended when Ferenczi was called up to serve in the Austro-Hungarian army as a medical officer. The second period of analysis was then delayed by almost two years. From mid-June 1916 Ferenczi was able to take three weeks leave. He spent it in Vienna, and had two hours of analysis with Freud each day. Ferenczi wrote '... these three weeks were the decisive ones in my life and for my life' (FF II: 613). The final episode of formal analytic treatment took place for two weeks from September 29 that same year. Again Ferenczi was able to arrange leave, and he asked Freud for three hours of treatment per day.

While we have no direct access to the content of this formal analysis, the correspondence between Ferenczi and Freud suggests that it had two abiding foci. These were firstly Ferenczi's ambivalence towards Gizella and his efforts to clarify whether he wanted to marry her, and secondly the interruption and possible termination of the analysis itself. In practice it is hard to see how either of these issues could be satisfactorily addressed in this analysis. The 'termination' issue would have been inevitably obfuscated in a formal analytic relationship overlaid on an ongoing informal one, as well as on their more general intimacy. Equally, with regard to the issue of Ferenczi's relationship with Gizella, we know from the extract of Freud's later letter to Gizella of 23 January 1917 already cited, that Freud was firmly committed from the start to working 'in friendly intercourse and through analysis' towards one outcome: marriage. Six months before that letter in fact, after Ferenczi's second period of analysis, Freud had explained to Gizella that 'after

containing myself for years I have finally come forward with advice' (FF II: 617). The context suggests that this had been advice to Ferenczi to propose to Gizella. But Freud continued that he was now uncertain, 'Fate has tied a knot with Elma which someone on the outside will have difficulty loosening' (ibid.). There is a certain irony to this. I have suggested in this article that alongside 'Fate,' another determinant of the 'knot with Elma' may have been a valid unconscious perception of the contaminated analytic bond with Freud.

In 1919 Gizella and her husband, Geza Palos, were finally divorced and Gizella married Ferenczi. Meanwhile, Elma and her husband, Hervé Laurvik, were in the process of separating. In a letter dated 'Christmas Day 1921,' Ferenczi was to write to his friend Groddeck:

Your letter has ... helped me to unmask myself, even if only partially, in front of my wife [Gizella]. I told her again about dissatisfaction, of repressed love for her daughter [Elma] (who should have been my bride. In fact she was, until a rather disparaging remark from Freud induced me to frantically fight this love, to really push the girl away from me). (Ferenczi & Groddeck 1986: 37)

The date of the letter adds poignancy to the passage; it was at Christmas time, exactly a decade earlier, that Ferenczi and Elma had been briefly betrothed. This letter, and another written on 8 January 1927 from Frederic Kovacs to his wife, Vilma (Kovacs 1982), suggest that the tortured vacillation in Ferenczi's affections for Elma and Gizella, tragic for all three concerned, was to continue for many years.

EPILOGUE

There has been no publication as yet of the bulk of the correspondence between Freud and Ferenczi after 1919. Dupont (1994), in the passage cited earlier, picked out two further periods, after 1911-12, in which this correspondence was especially characterized by informal analysis. Without access to Ferenczi's letters, there is no available record of the preoccupations and narratives which constituted his inner world in the second of these periods, 'around 1924.' However, in regard to the third period, 'the last years of Ferenczi's life,' we do have some records of his preoccupations. These are the entries in his remarkable clinical diary (Ferenczi 1988), started on the 7th January 1932.

As the relationship with Elma had dominated his 1911- 12 correspondence, so his relationship with another analysand, Elizabeth Severn, played the major role twenty years later in the diary. Ferenczi referred to her there under the pseudonym 'R.N.' Severn (first identified by Masson (1984)) was an American woman whose analysis with Ferenczi had begun in 1924 (Ferenczi 1988; Fortune 1993). Although she had already herself practiced successfully as a therapist for many years, she came to Ferenczi for treatment suffering severe psychological and physical symptoms, after unsuccessful treatment from other therapists (Fortune 1993). From October 1926 to June 1927, Severn was in New York, attending Ferenczi's lectures at the New School for Social Research and the lay analysis group that he supervised, as well as continuing her analysis with him (ibid.). By then, at least, she was his pupil as well as his patient.

But Ferenczi (1930, 1931) referred to Severn explicitly in two of his published articles. Here he described her not only as a training analysand, but also as a colleague whose advice and insights were highly valued. In his 1932 diary, Ferenczi recounted that he had taken Severn on holiday with him, and given her Sunday sessions so that their work together could continue. Moreover, a photograph published in Ferenczi & Groddeck (1982) and entitled '*Ferenczi entre Gizella et une femme inconnue* [Ferenczi between Gizella and an unknown woman]' actually shows Ferenczi, Gizella and Elizabeth Severn⁸ at Georg Groddeck's sanatorium in Baden-Baden. It has all the appearance of a 'family photo.'

Severn had a multi-faceted relationship with Ferenczi as analysand, pupil, colleague, and family/holiday acquaintance. This relationship matched the one that Freud had had with Ferenczi so closely that Ferenczi could have modelled it on this experience of formal and informal multiply contaminated analytic treatment. If so, then there is no indication in the diary that this identification was conscious. On the other hand, if Ferenczi's relationship with Severn unconsciously represented Freud's with Ferenczi, then a further

radical change to the frame of Severn's analysis which took place during 1931 may have extended this representation. Ferenczi finally acquiesced to her year-long demand that she be allowed to analyze 'hidden feelings' of hate in him (Ferenczi 1988). This developed into a formal arrangement of Ferenczi and Severn alternating as analyst and patient, either in double sessions or day by day. Ferenczi and Severn called this 'mutual analysis.' Regarded as a symbolic narrative extending a representation of Freud's analytic role, the mutual analysis with Severn may have depicted a latent perception by Ferenczi both of the analysis (formal and informal) being as much for Freud as for Ferenczi, and also of Freud's complete lack of anonymity in this analytic relationship.

DISCUSSION

As part of an examination of whether successful analytic treatment protects patients from a recurrence of neurosis later in life, Freud (1937) outlined his formal analytic treatment of Ferenczi and its aftermath. In a thinly disguised account he wrote that many years after successful analytic treatment 'trouble arose' (ibid.: 221). Freud continued:

[Ferenczi] became antagonistic to the analyst and reproached him for having failed to give him a complete analysis. The analyst, he said, ought to have known and to have taken into account the fact that a transference-relation can never be purely positive; he should have given his attention to the possibilities of a negative transference ... (ibid.)

Jones (1957) explained that Freud's description of 'trouble' referred to the letter from Ferenczi dated 17 January 1930 already cited in the introduction. If this is the case then Freud somewhat misrepresented Ferenczi's complaint. Ferenczi's letter emphasized that he was not only concerned about an unanalyzed transference relationship: 'I particularly regretted that, in the course of the analysis, you did not perceive in me and did not bring to abreaction negative feelings and phantasies that were only in part transferred [*zum Teil nur übertragenen*]' (Dupont 1988: 13). The present article has attempted to address the part of Ferenczi's latent negative feelings and phantasies that were *not* transferred.

Nine months before his untimely death, Ferenczi seemed to edge towards a conscious view that violation of analytic boundaries were a failing in his analytic treatment by Freud. In a diary entry dated 4 August 1932 he wrote:

Why antitrauma and predisposition? In the case of F. [Ferenczi] it appears that Fr. [Freud] altered the external situation to conform to the neurotic wish of the patient, in order to escape something traumatic Contrary to all the rules of technique that he established himself, he adopted Dr. F. almost like his son. (Ferenczi 1988: 246)

On an unconscious level the failings inherent in such a multiply contaminated analysis may have been accurately perceived and symbolically represented by Ferenczi at a much earlier stage. The thesis presented here has been that not only did frame deviations mitigate against success for Freud as 'physician' for Ferenczi, but that they may have become one *determinant* of Ferenczi's on-going troubles. Lang's work suggests, with hindsight, that Freud's only curative, or even innocuous, option would have been to insist that he was not, nor could he be, Ferenczi's 'physician,' formally or informally.

The perspective employed here to examine the relationship between Freud and Ferenczi was implicit in Ferenczi's own theory that patients unconsciously perceive and symbolize their psychoanalytic situation. It may be applicable more generally to understanding or telling the story of psychoanalysis (and, for that matter, of psychotherapy). In particular, analysts may unconsciously symbolize essentially accurate perceptions of their training analysis, in part through their own practice. Literal identification of trainee psychoanalysts

with their training analysts has often been considered. Veridical representation at a symbolic level may have very different hallmarks.

Let me finish on a cautionary note: a study like this should be read with some skepticism. The material included is inevitably subject to selectional and presentational bias. In any case, it is always possible that what may appear significant is in fact the product of a sequence of coincidences. There is no gainsaying this. The article has been written to encourage debate and further investigation, rather than to establish truths.

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Published in: Free Associations, Volume 7 Part 4 (N° 44), pp. 76-97, 2000.

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Notas al final

- 1.- In the interests of brevity, 'FF I' will denote Freud & Ferenczi (1993), and 'FF II' will denote Freud & Ferenczi (1996). In addition, citations from this correspondence will be referenced by their letter number rather than by the page number.
- 2.- In 1921 Ferenczi described the incident in a letter to Groddeck: ... in Palermo, where he wanted to do the famous work on paranoia (Schreber) together with me, in a sudden burst of rebellion, right on the first evening of work, when he wanted to dictate something to me, I jumped up and explained to him, that's no kind of working together, if he just dictated to me. "That is what you're like?" - he said astonished. "You obviously want to take the whole thing?" Having said that, he worked alone every evening from then on, and I was left with nothing at all [mir aber blieb nur das Nachsehen] - bitterness choked me. (Of course now I know, what the "working alone in the evening" - and the "choking" mean: yes, I wanted to be loved by Freud.) (Ferenczi & Groddeck 1986: 37) Incidentally, the phrase, 'mir aber blieb nur das Nachsehen: above, which I have translated as 'and I was left with nothing at all,' was given in the original French publication of the Ferenczi-Groddeck correspondence as 'il ne me restait que le travail de correction [he only left me the correction work]' (Ferenczi & Groddeck 1982: 57). Dupont (1994) rendered it 'he left to me only the work of correcting the manuscript' (ibid.: 302). These translations miss Ferenczi's meaning entirely. The phrase is now archaic, and it has no direct equivalent in English, but it conveys the sense of 'being left out' or of 'losing out.'
- 3.- Dupont (1982) wrote, 'in 1911 ... Elma, the eldest daughter of Gizella, at that time aged 24 ... ' (ibid.: 35). On this basis, Elma was born in 1886 or 1887. She died in 1972 (Haynal1993).
- 4.- Dupont (1994) stated that Ferenczi undertook Elma's analysis at Gizella's request. If so, this is not mentioned in the Freud-Ferenczi correspondence. Contrary to other recent accounts (Haynal 1988; Stanton 1990), Ferenczi's analysis of Elma was not precipitated by the suicide of a suitor. This suicide did not occur until October 1911 (FF I).
- 5.- The request was couched in these terms: After many bitter tears ... she consented to go to Vienna and enter treatment with you. I and Frau G. - we could hardly decide to entrust her with anyone else. The family has been advised of the fee. - If I get a positive response from you - which I very, very much wish - I will go to Vienna on Saturday evening, she will leave a day earlier, and on Sunday I can turn her over to you. (FF I: 263) Freud replied the following day, 2 January 1912. Referring to Ferenczi's 'wish' as a 'demand he wrote: 'Now to the matter of the treatment! If you don't ask about my inclinations and expectations but rather demand of me that I undertake it, then I naturally have to assent' (FF 1: 264). The seeming incongruity is echoed in recent accounts of Ferenczi's request. Haynal (1993) wrote that Ferenczi 'repeatedly begged Freud to take over Elma's analysis' (ibid.: xxii). Dupont (1994) wrote that 'By insistent demand, he [Ferenczi] succeeded in convincing Freud, who was extremely reluctant, to take Elma into analysis' (ibid.: 302).
- 6.- Literally, 'journey from bed-to-bed.'
- 7.- Swales (1982) draws together circumstantial evidence to support the suggestion that Freud was sexually involved with his sister-in-law Minna during a trip to Italy in 1900 and that she subsequently had an abortion. If Swales is correct, then Ferenczi's 'infantile thought' would have been especially unwelcome to Freud.
- 8.- . The identification of Severn is possible from a photograph published in Aron & Harris (1993).