

GEORG GRODDECK'S MATERNAL TURN: ITS EVOLUTION AND INFLUENCE ON EARLY PSYCHOANALYSTS.

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SUMMARY

The paper examines the biographical, cultural and clinical influences on the “maternal turn” of Georg Groddeck, a German physician and correspondent of Sigmund Freud. It demonstrates Groddeck’s influence on Sándor Ferenczi, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann and Karen Horney, each of whom influenced generations of psychoanalysts. The authors explore the resonance of Groddeck’s work with several concepts of contemporary psychoanalysis and raise the question as to whether the roots of these psychoanalytic concepts were seeded by Groddeck’s “maternal turn”, passed on by the above psychoanalysts through intergenerational psychoanalytic training and further elaborated by later investigators who were not necessarily familiar with the work of Groddeck.

Key words: maternal turn; mother–child interaction; Das Es; intersubjectivity; psychosomatics; Groddeck’s influence

RESUMEN

El artículo examina las influencias biográficas, culturales y clínicas en el “giro a lo maternal” de Georg Groddeck, médico alemán y corresponsal de Sigmund Freud. Demuestra la influencia de Groddeck en Sándor Ferenczi, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann y Karen Horney, cada uno de los cuales influyó en generaciones de psicoanalistas. Los autores exploran la resonancia del trabajo de Groddeck con varios conceptos del psicoanálisis contemporáneo y plantean la cuestión de si las raíces de estos conceptos psicoanalíticos fueron sembradas por este “giro a lo maternal” de Groddeck, transmitido por los psicoanalistas antes mencionados a través de la formación psicoanalítica intergeneracional y elaborado posteriormente por investigadores posteriores que no estaban necesariamente familiarizados con el trabajo de Groddeck.

Palabras clave: giro a lo maternal; interacción madre-hijo; Das Es; intersubjetividad; psicósomática; influencia de Groddeck.

INTRODUCTION

“At mother’s breast”: this is where Ibsen’s Peer Gynt found peace and safety after a life full of turbulence. Georg Groddeck (a great admirer of Peer Gynt), an outstanding clinician, an original thinker and a pioneer of psychosomatic medicine -was also the first to introduce the maternal perspective into psychoanalysis. Yet, despite some significant contributions highlighting Groddeck’s ideas and clinical work (Will, 1984; Martynkewicz, 1997; Rudnytsky, 2002; Hristeva, 2008), the intersection between his turn to maternalism, the development of psychosomatic medicine and contributions to contemporary psychoanalysis has not been examined.

While Groddeck’s early ideas and clinical work are rooted in the paternalistic tradition modeled by his mentor Ernst Schwenger, the shift to maternalism occurred when Groddeck joined Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis. This study will explore some biographical, cultural and clinical factors that contributed to this turn -including Groddeck’s opposition to Freud. It will also explore the resonance in the writings and clinical work of Groddeck with several concepts used in contemporary psychoanalysis.

Groddeck's impact on renowned "psychoanalytic mothers", such as Sándor Ferenczi, Melanie Klein, Karen Horney and Frieda Fromm-Reichmann has been largely neglected. One example of this neglect is that in Kristeva's (2008) book on Melanie Klein there is no single reference to Groddeck. Similarly, Hoffer's (1991) statement that "... if Sigmund Freud was the father of psychoanalysis, Sándor Ferenczi was the mother" (p. 466) might be refined. It was Groddeck, after all, who was "mother" to Ferenczi and several others. Nevertheless, both the advantages and the limitations of Groddeck's maternal perspective will be critically appraised.

EARLY GRODDECK

Groddeck did not start out with a strong support of women. While Will (1984, p. 188) describes Groddeck's first essay collection *A Woman's Problem* (1902) as a "sublime prose" written in the style of Nietzsche, a more recent biographer, Martynkewicz (1997), calls this book "a manifesto of misogyny" (p. 161). Groddeck recognized the growing importance of women, but he regarded this trend as a symptom of the feminization (Verweiblichung) of culture and of degeneration (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 165). He protested against the new professional, social, political and intellectual involvement of women and insisted that a woman's "only duty" was "to be a mother" (cited in Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 162). Not only did Groddeck demand a severe limitation of the freedom of women, but he also suggested that more attention be given to the preparation of women for their only role (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 163). A leitmotif in Groddeck's article "Die Frau" (The Woman) published in the journal *Der Volkserzieher* in 1909 is that women have no personality, so they have to give up any professional ambitions and obey men. As Martynkewicz points out, Groddeck emphasized that the future of Western culture depended on the performance of maternal duties and linked this idea with a racist political view: that is, by neglecting their role as mothers, women are responsible for the decline of "the most noble race in the world" (Groddeck, 1909a, p. 140; Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 165). Naturally, with such a radical and racist view, Groddeck provoked the indignation of women's rights activists (Martynkewicz 1997, p. 209).

In addition to Nietzsche, in his early works Groddeck also followed Möbius (1900) and his pamphlet *On the Physiological Debility of Woman*. Groddeck's early treatment methods were based on hydrotherapy and massage. Water was the pillar of his rudimentary physiological theory as presented in his "Studies on the Role of Water in the Human Organism" (1908). These writings and particularly Groddeck's (1913) next book *Nasamecu* -an abbreviation of the maxim "Natura sanat, medicus curat" (Nature heals, the physician treats)-demonstrate the author's special interest in "psychosomatic" phenomena. One example of such phenomena is when Groddeck explains how menstrual bleeding causes regular "changes of the mental state" of women (Groddeck, 1913, p. 99). Thus, Groddeck was interested in "ganzheit" or holistic mind-body relationships but he limited his explorations to the impact of the body on the "spirit" and neglected the influence of the psyche on the body. Initially, he viewed psychoanalysis with great skepticism. He condemned it as an "epidemic", a dangerous "stirring of the dirt buried in the depths of sexual life" (Groddeck, 1913, p. 97).

Before reconsidering this position and writing to Freud in 1917, Groddeck had a vision of medicine that was strictly paternalistic. This vision had come into being under the strong influence of Ernst Schweningen, Chancellor Bismarck's personal physician. Schweningen's fame as a clinician was based on the idea that every patient had his individual illness determined by his living conditions, and Groddeck adopted this idea himself. He was full of admiration for Schweningen who became a lifelong father figure (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 87). In Schweningen's famous book *The Physician*, the doctor was not only an artist (i.e., not a scientist) but a "ruler" (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 92) and "educator" preparing mankind for its future (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 91). Like Schweningen, Groddeck insisted early in his career on the supremacy of the physician, on his "great psychic dominance" over the patient (Groddeck, 1983, p. 31). The treatment itself was designed individually, mainly as a "hardening" of mind and body (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 134) based on Nietzsche's maxim that pain is "the greatest educator" of mankind. In 1923, Groddeck summarized his authoritarian treatment methods in *The Book of the It*:

It was at that time my habit to insist with great emphasis, without any fear of consequences, upon my smallest orders being obeyed. “You had better die than fail to carry out my instructions to the last letter”, I used to say, and I meant it quite seriously. Stomach patients who suffered from vomiting or body pains after eating certain dishes, I fed exclusively on these dishes until they had learned to tolerate them; I compelled others who lay in bed unable to move, owing to some inflammation of the veins or the joints, to get up and walk about; I treated apoplectics by making them bend over every day; and people I knew must die in a few hours; I dressed and took out for a walk -it happened once in my experience that one of these crumpled up, dead, in front of my door. This method of enforcing an infallible, authoritative suggestion, in the manner of the kindly, all-powerful father, I had seen in my own father, had learned from that great master of the art of the father-doctor, Schweninger, and had had something of it in me from birth. (p. 222)

Yet, Groddeck’s early writings show that both physicians and mothers were linked with the “future” of mankind and put in charge of it. This parallelism between physicians and mothers will be preserved throughout Groddeck’s writings and will be further developed in Groddeck’s conception of the physician mothering the patient. In his novel *A Child of the Earth* (1905), Groddeck presents his ideal of mothering and his notion of the mother as an embodiment of “Godnature”, a pantheistic term he had adopted from Goethe. As in “Die Frau” where a nurturing woman is a holy symbol of Godnature (Groddeck, 1909a, p. 137), in *A Child of the Earth* Groddeck bestowed an aura of holiness and Dionysian vigor both on the protagonist’s mother and on his pregnant wife Anna, a ruler of the future (Groddeck, 1905, p. 385), a “goddess” (Groddeck, 1905, p. 480). In this novel, the paternalistic line is still strong, with the father of the protagonist still shown as a “man of action” who finds a heroic death struggling against the mighty river in order to save the old bridge, a symbol of the century-long tradition of patriarchal society. But the death of the father leaves the young protagonist alone with his mother and sets the beginning of a new and close symbiosis between them. As indicated by the reference to Mother Earth in its title, it is this book that marks the onset of Groddeck’s transition to a maternal model.

THE SHIFT TO THE MATERNAL

Groddeck’s “maternal turn” is rooted in his own biography (Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 182). His relationship with his mother was mostly formal and distant, lacking “emotionality and tenderness” (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 106). It resulted in “emotional vulnerability”, even “emotional abandonment” (Rudnytsky, 2002, pp. 182–183). But in 1883 Groddeck also experienced a period of happiness with his mother and of a “revival of my sunny childhood” during a serious scarlet fever episode (cited in Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 66). The striking link between illness, symbiosis with the mother and happiness is noteworthy. None of these components will be missing from Groddeck’s future conceptualization of the maternal. By 1905, when he published *A Child of the Earth*, Groddeck had faced both his mother’s death in 1892 and the gradual disruption of his marriage to Else von der Goltz. To Groddeck, his wife Else was an “elf”, an ideal of female perfection (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 116). But according to biographer Martynkewicz (1997), after the birth of their daughter, Barbara in 1901, Groddeck soon felt excluded from the “mother–child dyad” and responded with “vehement attacks” (p. 159). So at least from a biographical point of view, Groddeck’s transition to the maternal sprang from negative emotions and experiences -from isolation, disappointment and painful loss.

Yet, Groddeck’s growing interest in the maternal perspective was also caused by the specifics of his therapeutic work at his sanatorium in Baden Baden. The majority of Groddeck’s patients were female (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 156). Hot baths, pain-causing massage and radical diet were still pivotal to Groddeck’s therapeutic program. Gradually, however, Groddeck began to listen to the narratives of his patients, with the “talking sessions” soon becoming “the best of the whole treatment” according to Groddeck’s patient Anna de Bruyn (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 156). Besides, Groddeck was very courteous with his female patients even sending them small birthday presents (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 197).

The question of whether Groddeck had really discovered the significance of “resistance” and “transference” as early as 1909 during the treatment of his patient Miss G. as maintained by him in his first letter to Freud in 1917 (Groddeck and Freud, 1974, pp. 7–11) is controversial. Most authors trace back Groddeck’s interest in psychoanalysis to that treatment (Will, 1984; Rudnytsky, 2002). Having found no evidence for such a treatment except for Groddeck’s letter to Freud and the respective description of this treatment in the epistolary novel *The Book of the It*, Martynkewicz (1997), on the contrary, regards the whole case as a “self-mystification” (p. 199). Even if Martynkewicz is right and if Groddeck’s “joy of discovery” (Groddeck and Freud 1974, p. 8) of basic psychoanalytic concepts is “fictitious”, the conditions in his sanatorium make the transition to a new method of treatment very plausible. Groddeck’s (1913) close contact with his patients and his constant, “selfless” (see Magda Knoch’s testimony, cited in Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 198) interaction with them at his sanatorium as well as his commitment to their sorrows, in conjunction with his own growing bitterness, disappointment and discontent, may have given birth to a new attitude toward his patients even while “outwardly” he was still sticking to the paternal model of therapy documented in *Nasamecu*.

Groddeck’s therapy was designed to cure organic disease. He vehemently opposed 19th-century scientific medicine with its mechanistic view of man and was searching for an “inner principle” (Martynkewicz, 1997, p. 207) connecting psyche and body, capable of creating or restoring the integrity of man. Groddeck’s goal was neither a scientific nor a purely psychoanalytic one. He focused on the holistic ideal of “ganzheit”, the “wholeness” envisioned by a long tradition of German idealistic philosophy. Although Groddeck probably exaggerated his “discovery” of psychoanalytic scientific “basics” like “resistance” and “transference” in his own clinical practice, he was right to insist on his own originality: starting with a shattering diagnosis about modern life, he was indeed beginning to bring into life a reparative therapeutic program grounded in the philosophies of Spinoza, Goethe, Nietzsche, Bachofen and Bölsche and based on regeneration and recreation. As was shown above, Groddeck regarded mothers as the incarnation of the creative principle, of Godnature. It was in his book *Toward Godnature* (1909b), long before joining psychoanalysis in 1917, that Groddeck used the term *Das Es* instead of Godnature for the first time. *Das Es* has been translated as the “It” and was chosen by Groddeck specifically to describe “a force that could not be defined” and, therefore, should have the most nondescriptive name possible.

Welcomed and motivated by Freud (Groddeck and Freud, 1974, pp. 14–16), Groddeck enthusiastically joined psychoanalysis. He was able to get a deeper insight into Freud’s science, parts of which were reverberating with his own preanalytical intuitions (e.g., the role of the symbol, the central importance of the child and the fundamental significance of the therapeutic relationship for the outcome of the therapy). But Groddeck still missed in psychoanalysis the above-mentioned aspect of synthetic reintegration and recreation as well as the interest in the significance of motherhood. From 1916–1917 on, Groddeck began in his clinical work to augment paternal attitudes like strength, discipline, challenge, risk and “toughening” of body and mind with “soft” maternal approaches like tenderness, love and safety. Meanwhile, Freud (1923) quickly and without Groddeck’s consent appropriated Groddeck’s *Das Es* and redefined it to conform to what Strachey translated as the “Id” in Freud’s tripartite model of the mind.

Groddeck also observed that Freud continued to preserve the patriarchal, phallogocentric stance, and largely neglected the female psyche. In fact, while Freud had started out dreaming of rebellion and patricide, he had ended up as a “superfather” himself. Both Groddeck’s own paternalistic approach that emphasized the suggestive power and supremacy of the male physician and Freud’s approach had become inadequate for Groddeck. In the years to come, Groddeck explored a different way of working from the perspective of mothers and transformed his own clinical practice more into a form of mothering. By 1916, when Groddeck started his famous talks to his patients, Freud and his disciples had elaborated an extensive, complex theory of the human psyche. Groddeck’s priority, however, was clinical work, he “focused ... on clinical treatment and experimentation” (Poster, 2009, p. 196). True to his lifelong antipathy to theory, especially to that of scientific medicine, and even though he had read Freud’s most important books, Groddeck was not content to limit his work to Freud’s psychoanalysis. From the beginning, it was his intention to create an innovative clinical framework “combining multiple modalities of treatment” (Poster, 2009, p. 196) and to

establish an open and flexible therapy not excluding theoretical issues but avoiding the rigidity of theories and institutional constraints.

Sanatoria were widespread in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. They were part of the fashionable reform movement directed against the “decline” of mankind. This was the original idea fostered also by Schweninger. But the clinical setting in Groddeck’s sanatorium changed considerably after 1916 when he started applying psychoanalytic knowledge to explore the unity of body and psyche. His previous paternalistic, authoritarian approach, with its emphasis on “energy” (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 11) and on reenergizing the body through “active technique” and “power methods”, gave way to a new and strong interest in introspective work. Yet, consistent with Groddeck’s lifelong conviction that language and speech are highly insufficient means of communication (Groddeck, 1964, pp. 22–24), the Freudian “talking cure” conducted on the couch was dismissed. To Groddeck, more important than speech were the movements and the expressions of the body. He was a fervent proponent of Nietzsche’s idea that “the body is the great wisdom”, not merely an aggregation of single parts, but a complicated, yet miraculous organism created by Das Es, the undefinable It. Unlike Freud, Groddeck (1987, I, p. 12) did not focus on the “struggle” between the “two souls” of man -the conscious and the unconscious one. Rather, he tried to “negotiate” with Das Es described by him as a “strange creature”. Being a creation of Das Es, man is “governed”, even “lived” (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 14) by it. Groddeck’s sanatorium was conceived as a “realm” of Das Es facilitating child-like regression where “the tormented creature[s]” (Groddeck, 1992, p. 15) were allowed to express their anxiety and anguish, to “cry and whine” (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 13).

In contrast to Freud, the mother became pivotal and “of prime importance” in Groddeck’s work, because of this perspective. To Groddeck, the mother–child relationship is a lifelong one, an “enormously refined feeling” (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 15). His clinical practice reflected these ideas by introducing an emotional, empathic approach and putting an emphasis on primary processes, regression and passivity. The culminating point of Groddeck’s new therapeutic insights is described in *The Book of the It*. The passage reveals an innovative therapeutic model which opposes Freud’s treatment methods based on paternal authority and abstinence:

In Fräulein G.’s case, everything went on quite differently from the start. Her childlike attitude toward me -indeed, as I understood later, it was that of a child of three- compelled me to assume the mother’s role. Certain slumbering mother virtues were awakened in me by the patient, and these directed my procedure. Later on, when I came to look into my own medical activities more searchingly, I discovered that often before I had been forced by mysterious influences of this kind to adopt some other attitude than the paternal one toward my patients, although consciously and theoretically I held the firm conviction that the doctor must be friend and father, must control his patients. (Groddeck, 1923, pp. 222–223)

The new “maternal” treatment was characterized, then, by the renunciation of conscious control both by the physician and the patient and by the humble acceptance of the “mysterious” forces dominating the disease and the treatment. A new and strong bond between patient and physician resembling the mother–child relationship was the result.

MOTHER VIRTUES

As shown above, Groddeck’s approach was marked by anti-scientism and a more philosophical, speculative attitude than Freud’s psychoanalysis. In order to reveal the importance of childhood, motherhood and of the mother–child symbiosis, Groddeck largely applied Freud’s method of free association. Although he used this method to delink the chains of logic, Groddeck’s approach was not free of purpose. His often excessively free associations strongly rely on symbolism and speculation (see Heyer’s criticism in Groddeck, 2011, pp. 217–218). He strives to discover and reconstruct the “sense” and the “meaning” of illness. Each disease has a “purpose” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 102), often presented by the author in esthetic terms. The

sickness is “just as purposeful as playing the piano”, it is “a drama staged by the It, by means of which it announces what it could not say with the tongue” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 103). Before he learned about Freud, Groddeck had independently become aware of the “flight into illness”. But unlike Freud who had unveiled this mechanism as a meaningful but “foul” compromise between conflicting currents in the human psyche, Groddeck emphasized the positive aspects of this phenomenon and connected them with organic disease. The mother and maternal transference play a particular role in this process. Illness enables regression and restores the initial, lost symbiosis with one’s mother.

Groddeck’s writings abound in maternal metaphors and symbols. His early works were full of admiration for the high mission of mothers and were declared with a prophetic, panegyric tone. However, under the influence of psychoanalysis with its emphasis on conflict, the author turned to the dark sides of motherhood -the horror of losing one’s beauty with the birth of a child, the wish of every mother to kill her still unborn child, the mutual aversion of mother and child during the last days of pregnancy. “The process of separation” (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 17) between mother and child and the breaking up of the dyad are a natural consequence of this development. The conflicts between mother and child, especially those between mothers and daughters in which “hatred” is a common feeling (Groddeck, 1923, p. 15), are at the center of Groddeck’s *The Book of the It* too.

In 1916, Groddeck even denounces the existence of a tie between mother and child: “A real bond between mother and child does not exist” (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 23). Groddeck’s depressing portraits of the “callous” mother (Groddeck, 1923, p. 14) who is full of “antipathy” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 14) toward her child as well as the wish of the child to revenge itself on the mother constitute a pessimistic, even tragic level of Groddeck’s conceptualization of the mother–child relationship. Nevertheless, having disclosed the painful, traumatic drama of the interaction between mother and child in real life, a drama that is reminiscent of the dismal naturalistic plays with their desperate protagonists and conditions, Groddeck goes on to create a counterpoint, a Nietzschean “counterdrama” full of joy, pleasure, passion and life. Even though the delivery of a child is a “process of separation”, for the mother it is the moment of “the highest pleasure” and of “pure”, “elevating” pain (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 27). Nietzsche’s idea of the educating role of pain reappears here, but this role is now a privilege of the mother in labor, and is not available to men. Like Nietzsche, Groddeck tries to create a dialectic relationship between pain and lust by pointing out that the pain is a “condition” of pleasure (Groddeck, 1923, p. 66). With the help of psychoanalysis and due to its focus on sexuality, Groddeck underscores the sexual relationship between mother and child (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 39). In this connection, a major idea presented by Groddeck in a disarmingly frank manner is very Nietzschean in its emphasis on pleasure, too: that mothers are the child’s first instructors in masturbation (Groddeck, 1923, p. 46). This was Groddeck’s specific contribution to the “discussion on onanism” that the early psychoanalysts were having in Vienna (see Nunberg and Federn, 1981). So despite the pain, the hatred, the envy and the revenge poisoning the mother–child dyad, Groddeck’s interest now shifted to a more positive relationship between the mother and the child that paved the way for a new symbiosis with the mother based on hedonism, sensuousness and vitality as described by Nietzsche.

In order to develop his new ideas on mothering, Groddeck made use of fundamental psychoanalytic concepts but modified them and adapted them to his own notions of motherhood. His “matricentrism” (Lewinter, 1990, p. 55) implied a shift to a less theoretical, less abstract understanding and interpretation of life. This attitude corresponded with the needs of his patients and the listeners to his talks and readers of his writings. *The Book of the It*, for example, was addressed to a lady friend whose prototype may be Groddeck’s friend Hanneliese Schumann (Martynkewicz, 1997, pp. 211–212; Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 166) but who is modeled as a typical, ideal recipient -a woman and a mother (Hristeva, 2008, pp. 474–479). Apart from the protagonist Patrik Troll, the majority of the figures in this book are female, so this epistolary novel is oriented to the needs and perspectives of women and mothers. This dialogic literary form was further explored by Mikhail Bakhtin and has application to both intersubjectivity and psychoanalysis (Priel, 1999).

Groddeck adopted psychoanalytic terminology, but he changed its scope, made it sound more personal and saturated it with deep philosophical meaning. Through his focus on motherhood, he corrected Freud's one-sided interpretation of the Oedipus complex. While Freud had stressed exclusively the love of boys for their mothers and the hostility to their fathers (see, e.g., Freud, 1909), Groddeck pointed to the needs and wishes of girls and women and their relationship with both their fathers and mothers. In a very natural, almost nonchalant tone, Patrik Troll discusses "the wish [of every small girl] to receive a child from the father" (Groddeck, 1923, p. 76). The relationship between mothers and daughters was a natural focus for Groddeck. He used the psychoanalytic term "imago" mainly as "mother imago" moving away from the "father imago" (Hristeva, 2008, p. 438) and reinforcing the prominent position of the mother in human life. To the concept of "penis envy" Groddeck added the concept of "uterus envy": "... envy that I am not myself a woman and cannot be a mother" (Groddeck, 1923, p. 21). Groddeck stressed the priority of mothers while men are characterized by their "emptiness" (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 25). Whereas Freud regarded narcissism as a transitory, almost pathologic stage that had to be overcome (Freud, 1914), Groddeck "normalized" it and redefined it by linking it with motherhood: narcissism is "the solitude of the child within the womb" (Groddeck, 1923, p. 79). Freud shied away from including the mother-child relationship in his theory because it led to deeper, pre-Oedipal layers of human existence, while Groddeck abandoned the "father transference" practiced by Freud (see Groddeck and Freud, 1974, p. 59; see also Freud to Hilda Doolittle: "I do not like to be the mother in the transference, it always surprises and shocks me a little. I feel so very masculine", cited in Sayers, 1991, p. 8). Freud who was the implicit recipient of *The Book of the It* (Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 166; Hristeva, 2008, pp. 482-484) soon noticed the subversive character of Groddeck's "maternal" revision of psychoanalysis and protested against "placing him in the maternal sequence" (Groddeck and Freud, 1974, p. 59; see also Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 169).

In spite of Freud's opposition, Groddeck passionately engaged in the description and interpretation of maternal conflicts and used maternal transference to explain organic disease. For example, he traced sterility back to mother-child conflicts: "People who hate their mothers create no children for themselves, and that is so far true that one may postulate of a childless marriage, without further inquiry, that one of the two partners is a mother-hater" (Groddeck, 1923, p. 14). Pregnancy phantasies are an integral part of Groddeck's writings, and they occur not only with women but with men as well, not only as "thoughts of pregnancy" (Groddeck, 1923, p. 24) but as physiological reactions as well, when the It of men "creates the swollen stomach by means of eating, drinking, flatulency, or whatnot, because it wishes to be pregnant and accordingly believes itself to be so" (Groddeck, 1923, p. 23).

Groddeck turned to mothering to cure strange and incurable diseases as was the case with a mother who injured her index finger while opening a tin of fruit in unconscious protest of her wifely duties in an unhappy marriage tinged with racism. After the amputation of the finger, the finger stump literally would not heal until Groddeck helped her understand the psychological and social bases of both her injury and its failure to heal: because of her growing aversion to her Jewish husband, the woman was reluctant to have another child by him (Groddeck, 2011, pp. 238-240); however, due to her husband's impotence she had been "obliged to rub the member with the thumb and index finger of her right hand, and this was at once rendered impossible when she lost the use of that finger" (Groddeck, 2011, p. 240). Groddeck was able to recognize the deep symbolic significance of the tin, the fruit, and the finger (Groddeck, 2011, p. 240). Also remarkable in this case is that in an atmosphere of an increasing anti-Semitism (1928), Groddeck placed the duty of motherhood above all sociopolitical and "racial" considerations.

Being a gifted writer, Groddeck used his literary talent to unfold the life creating power of mothers. The texts offer a profusion of vivid descriptions of motherhood and especially of the body of mothers. Groddeck criticized Freud and psychoanalysis for underestimating the female breast, "the most sensitive organ" (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 39), and created impressive images of child nurturing filled with pleasure and happiness. Moreover, while Freud was looking everywhere mainly for phallic symbols, the whole universe is seen by Groddeck as a representation of the female body and a symbolization of motherhood. Groddeck imposes his maternal perspective not only on psychoanalysis but on all spheres of human life: the biblical

apple is a symbol of the female breast (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 43), the fig and the pear are symbols of the uterus (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 43) and the bed is a “haven” (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 81) invented because of human desire for the womb of the mother (Groddeck, 1923, p. 80). The sea “is not just a sea but the mother, the church is not just a church but mother ...” (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 16). The whole world is a surrogate of the mother (the finger has become “a surrogate” of the breast of the mother (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 46)). Gradually, Groddeck turns the womb into an idyllic, heavenly microcosm. Patrik Troll urges the lady friend in *The Book of the It* to become an “unborn child” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 79) again, in order to retreat into the uterus -a “treasure chest” (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 23), a romantic place providing comfort and security reminiscent of Romain Rolland’s “oceanic feeling” quoted by Freud:

Let us assume that you are able to return into the womb. I think myself it must be the same sort of feeling as if someone goes to bed after a checkered day, full of agreeable and disagreeable thoughts and events, full of sorrows and cares, of work and pleasure and danger, and then gradually gets drowsy and, with the delightful sensation of being safe and undisturbed, goes off to sleep. (Groddeck, 1923, p. 79)

Instead of advocating “nerves like steel” (Groddeck, 1913, p. 114) and efficiency, Groddeck became fascinated with the softness of the female body and the secure and peaceful isolation in the mother’s womb. Even Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor, was “a mother’s boy” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 81), “ruled in the depths by his mother imago” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 82) and having “in fact the nerves of a boy” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 81), craving for the peace provided by his mother. But Groddeck’s maternal philosophy does not add up only to peace and safety. One of the most serious implications and consequences of his “maternal turn” is the focus on “love” and on the “ethics of love” -a category neglected by Freud despite the emphasis he placed on sexuality (see Lothane, 1998). Groddeck pointed to “that first, deepest, never-dying love” of the child for the mother because “no man can easily cast off this mother being; right to his grave she rocks him in her arms” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 81).

GRODDECK’S LEGACY AND ACHIEVEMENT—A REAPPRAISAL

Groddeck’s maternal turn had a significant impact on Sándor Ferenczi, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann and Karen Horney. They, in turn, had a major effect on the development and direction of psychoanalysis. Both Rudnytsky (2002) and Poster (2009) pointed to the “schismatic” character of this development placing Groddeck next to Ferenczi and Rank and emphasizing the “revolutionary” (p. 198) impetus of these “pioneers” of psychoanalysis and the great relevance of their thoughts for contemporary psychoanalysis:

The research of both Ferenczi (with Rank) and Groddeck immediately began to help to fill the void of subjectivity and relationship created by the objectivist approach dictated by Freud’s tripartite model. ... They laid the groundwork for the development of the fields of object relations (and later—self-psychology, interpersonal, and relational psychoanalysis) and psychosomatics, respectively (Poster, 2009, p. 198).

Similarly, while not commenting on Groddeck’s possible influence, Peter Hoffer (2008) called the 1923 work by Ferenczi and Rank the beginning of a “Kuhnian paradigm shift” in psychoanalytic theory and practice.

Maternity, intersubjectivity and Das Es

According to Rudnytsky (2002), Groddeck is a “progenitor of the relational tradition” in psychoanalysis (p. 143). In fact, the turn to “an increasingly explicit two-person psychology, with a new emphasis on the recreation of the mother–infant relationship in the analytic situation” attributed by Axel Hoffer (1991)

exclusively to Ferenczi (p. 468) had been initiated by Groddeck through his decades long, intensive interest in the mother–child relationship and research on motherhood. It became only possible through Groddeck’s concept of *Das Es*, developed as early as 1909, and then introduced to Freud in 1917 and then to the psychoanalytic community in *The Book of the It* in 1923. In his Faustian search for the “eternally feminine” (Groddeck, 1909a, p. 127), he himself was strongly influenced by Goethe and Nietzsche. Nietzsche’s aphorism on “Mothers” Nr. 72 in *The Gay Science*, a book with which Groddeck was familiar, annihilates the father, presenting the mother as “the productive” one (Nietzsche, 1994, p. 84) and comparing maternal love with the love of an artist for his creations. Following Nietzsche, Groddeck drew a parallel between women’s pregnancy and the “spiritual pregnancy” of men as shown above. Although he had vehemently opposed modern feminism and had denied women many of the rights to which they were aspiring, even in his early works Groddeck (1909a) stressed the central importance of motherhood and of mothers as a “force of nature”, helping men find their way back to Godnature, to the “essence of the world”, to “man’s harmony with the universe” (pp. 139–140).

Most commentators have largely overlooked the close interrelatedness between the mother, the physician, the patient and *Das Es* in Groddeck’s conception and have given preference either to the “maternal side” or to the “relational side”, or to *Das Es*. By introducing the mother as a representative of *Das Es* and by granting men and physicians access to the maternal role and at the same time enabling the reversal of roles, Groddeck developed a dynamic model of human and therapeutic relationship that opened the way for an appreciation of the maternal perspective. His “maternal turn” was a return to the power of Nature reinvigorating human beings, repairing and restoring the meaning of life and human confidence. It was also Groddeck’s specific way to “save” the physician from the rigid professional norms and standards imposed on him by bourgeois society and to reintegrate him into the unity of the universe. Groddeck had developed his idea of the mother teaching human beings to “see” “Godnature” long before he became interested in psychoanalysis. From 1916–1917 on, motherly love continued to be “the greatest of all miracles” to Groddeck, but an important change in his views had taken place: whereas in 1909, he had shared Nietzsche’s contempt for the weak and helpless and had criticized the dangerous “basic drive” of mothers “to support weakness and to elevate it” (Groddeck, 1909a, p. 141), the therapeutic dyad and the conception of maternal transference created by him during his psychoanalytic period were based on the acceptance of weakness -both on the part of the patient and of the physician. So Groddeck reassessed and reevaluated his early judgement, turning the previously negative characteristics of mothers into positive ones, thus humanizing his idea of motherhood and of therapeutic work anchored in maternal transference.

There is general agreement that Groddeck’s *Das Es* was influenced by Goethe’s and Spinoza’s Godnature. Yet, little attention has been paid to the affinity of Groddeck’s *Das Es* to Nietzsche’s aristocratic and utterly masculine concept “Will to Power”. Freud did not note this affinity, either, even while he insisted that Groddeck had adopted *Das Es* from Nietzsche, thereby trying to diminish Groddeck’s original contribution (Bos, 1992). *Das Es*, however, cannot be found as an entity (i.e., as a noun) in Nietzsche’s works: its place is occupied by the “Will to Power”. Groddeck’s genius was to amalgamate the paternal, masculine principle underlying Nietzsche’s concept “Will to Power” with the maternal principle of “Godnature” into the unity of *Das Es*, which is neither masculine nor feminine, but an open, indefinite concept that is applicable to both genders. With regard to the therapeutic situation, *Das Es* made it possible to abandon “any pretense to omniscience” and to adopt “an attitude of humility and even reverence toward patients” (Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 192). This view is of special importance in light of Groddeck’s “psychosomatic” medicine since it shows the inadequacy of this dualistic term for his holistic views: Groddeck teaches us to respect *Das Es* and feel reverence for men and women, body and soul, since they all belong to an organic, inseparable, cosmic “Whole”. Thus, by creating *Das Es*, Groddeck also avoided the drift to a one-sided gynocentrism. From Schopenhauer and Indian philosophy, he adopted the monistic maxim “tat twam asi” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 103) -“That thou art”, indicating the transcendental unity of all human beings.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to stress the instability of this conception, too. Groddeck’s dyadic, relational model consisting of the patient and the analyst both of whom have a share of *Das Es*, can easily lose its balance

with *Das Es* obtaining hegemony. The cult of *Das Es* may result both in an excessive submissiveness of the dyad to *Das Es* accompanied by total therapeutic nihilism, or in a detrimental, dangerous self-deification as pronounced in Groddeck's article "On the It": "God is in us, we are God, the It is God, an omnipotent it We are forced to believe in God because we are ourselves God" (cited in Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 195). Groddeck's conception is useful and valuable only as long as it remains "dialectical" (Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 177), as long as there is unity, but not a total identity of its components. Total identity entails loss of the relational aspects with its tensions, the abolition of intersubjectivity with its dialectic dynamics and the sacrifice of ethical responsibility. Keeping the "maternal" factor as a mediator between the components of the model, on the other hand, guarantees the balance between *Das Es* and the human beings constituting the dyad.

Georg Groddeck—"Mother of Them All"

The Book of the It presents the most detailed and balanced state of Groddeck's ideas and has exerted a powerful impact on many psychoanalysts. Through the turn to maternity, "psychoanalysis has been turned upside down" (Sayers, 1991, p. 3). Groddeck helped to liberate several early psychoanalytic pioneers from Freud's authoritarian style and helped them to find their own voice. After Freud appropriated his *Das Es*, Groddeck (1977) wrote to Freud on May 27, 1923:

I appear to myself as a plough, and you as the peasant who uses the plough -or perhaps another one- for his own purposes I may be wrong, but I believe that I know the effect you have on the soil, e.g. on your pupils, better than the farmer. For him a crop failure in this or that spot is not so important. The present-day generation of your disciples is of importance only to us, not to you. (p. 79).

Like Groddeck in his childhood, Sándor Ferenczi "felt unloved" -he wrote that in his childhood he had experienced "too little love and too much rigor" from his mother (Ferenczi and Groddeck, 2006, p. 52)- and was also "characterologically predisposed to maternal and child-like roles" (Poster, 2009, p. 201). Freud immediately noticed the affinity between Groddeck and Ferenczi and put them in touch with each other in 1917. Not surprisingly, then, Budapest and Baden-Baden became "home" to maternal transference and the "uncensored ideas" of *Das Es* (Poster, 2009, p. 201). It was Groddeck who "encouraged and supported Ferenczi's clinical experiments in activity, relaxation, maternal transference, and mutual analysis" (Poster, 2009, p. 196) liberating him from Freud's paternalism and freeing him up to follow his own path for his last decade. Fromm (1935) wrote that "the development of Ferenczi can only be understood in light of Groddeck's influence" (p. 386). In 1923, Ferenczi himself credited Groddeck with stressing "the exorbitant meaning of the mother" (Ferenczi and Groddeck, 2006, p. 97). Calling himself a "motherly" physician, in a letter to Ferenczi (December 12, 1922) Groddeck commented on Ferenczi's use of paternal transference and explained his own preference for the maternal transference:

You assume for example that the paternal transference is necessary for the success of the analysis. But why should the maternal transference or that of the playmates or of the milk bottle or of the rhythm or of the rubber doll and of the rattle be less useful? (Ferenczi and Groddeck, 2006, p. 81)

Ferenczi's "feminine principle" elaborated in *Thalassa*, in "Male and Female", in the *Clinical Diary* and in other writings (see Martin Cabré, 2009) has been stimulated by his intensive exchange of views with Groddeck on femininity and motherhood. For example, Ferenczi included Groddeck's idea about the pleasure that women experience during the birth of a child in his theory of feminine genitality (see Ferenczi, 1924, p. 340). Besides, he recognized Groddeck's priority in voicing the idea that the child receives its first and deepest impressions in the birth canal (Ferenczi, 1924, p. 346). Ferenczi (1930) clearly acknowledged Groddeck's influence on his own therapeutic technique:

In a conversation with Anna Freud in which we discussed certain points in my technique she made the following pregnant remark: “You really treat your patients as I treat the children whom I analyze”. I had to admit that she was right, and I would remind you that in my most recent publication, a short paper on the psychology of unwanted children who later become subjects for analysis, I stated that the real analysis of resistances must be prefaced by a kind of comforting preparatory treatment. The relaxation-technique which I am suggesting to you assuredly obliterates even more completely the distinction between the analysis of children and that of adults -a distinction hitherto too sharply drawn. In making the two types of treatment more like one another I was undoubtedly influenced by what I saw of the work of Georg Groddeck, the courageous champion of the psycho-analysis of organic diseases whom I consulted about an organic illness. I felt that he was right in trying to encourage his patients to a childlike naiveté, and I saw the success thus achieved. (pp. 122–123)

After Ferenczi’s death, his wife Gizella confirmed in a letter to Groddeck (February 28, 1934) that “nobody had such a lasting impact on him as you” (Ferenczi and Groddeck, 2006, p. 191).

Another “partisan” (Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 152) influenced by Groddeck was Frieda Fromm-Reichmann. When in 1923 Groddeck considered “setting up a maternity service at his sanitarium” in order to implement “his ideas of childbirth without anxiety and his wish to use analysis and hypnosis in obstetrics”, he “called in Fromm-Reichmann as consultant for this project” (Petratos, 1990, p. 161). Although she was much more cautious than Groddeck in her own therapeutic work (Siebenhüner, 2005, p. 155), her friendship with Groddeck made her realize the importance of transference and countertransference (Siebenhüner, 2005, p. 154), of the symbolic character of organic symptoms and of the self-healing powers of the human organism (Siebenhüner, 2005, p. 155). She successfully applied these insights into the therapy of psychoses. Since she was acquainted with Bachofen’s matriarchal theory, Groddeck’s maternal perspective fell on fruitful ground with her and resulted in her concept of the “schizophrenogenic mother” (Siebenhüner, 2005, p. 156), since, however, widely discredited for blaming mothers for the mental illness of their children. Furthermore, Groddeck impressed Frieda Fromm-Reichmann with his insistence on the “natural knowledge” of women and mothers. In 1940, she recalled how Groddeck was urging the female psychoanalysts at a conference in Heidelberg in 1932: “You women conceal from the men your knowledge about your instincts and drives, the way you are doing this with your body organs. Why don’t you tell us men about them?” (cited in Siebenhüner, 2005, p. 156, Note 23).

A letter that Frieda Fromm-Reichmann wrote to Groddeck in 1932 after the removal of a myoma clearly shows how profoundly her understanding of disease was influenced by Groddeck’s maternal views. She compares the myoma with a child and the surgery with childbirth: “Eleven days ago, I gave birth to it (i.e. it has been removed). When the doctor showed me the specimen two days later, ... I had to laugh about the power of *Das Es* which had formed a real child with a head, a body and legs” (cited in Siebenhüner, 2005, p. 56).

The prominence that Groddeck gave to women and mothers was acknowledged by Karen Horney, too. Groddeck’s impact on Horney who is described by Makari (2008) as “a rebel and arguably the first great female psychoanalytic theoretician” (p. 380) had very far-reaching effects. Horney first met Groddeck at the 7th International Psychoanalytic Congress in Berlin in 1922 and corresponded with him until his death in 1934. Before leaving Germany, she visited him in Baden-Baden in 1932 (Will, 1984). Groddeck’s high esteem of mothers and nursing confirmed what she had felt and described in her *Adolescent Diaries* herself: “In nursing, such an intimate union of mother and child as never occurs later. Mutual sensual satisfaction ... what I value most just now in a woman is motherliness” (cited in Sayers, 1991, p. 89). Groddeck’s “superb frankness” in *The Book of the It* which she applauded in a letter to him on July 12, 1923 was especially appealing to the rebellious Karen Horney (Martynekewicz, 1997, p. 297). Discussing the principles of “heterosexual attraction”, in “The Flight from Womanhood” Horney (1926) criticized the exclusive attention that psychoanalysis paid to the natural attachment of boys to their mothers and addressed a crucial question raised by Groddeck in *The Book of the It*: “but how is it that the little girl

becomes attached to the opposite sex?" (p. 63). Trying to overcome the limitations of Freud's paternalism, Karen Horney also wrote to Groddeck:

I consider it rather one-sided that the [Freudian] emphasis is always on the attitude towards the father, with a footnote always explaining that for simplicity's sake only the attitude towards the father is mentioned but that it would also apply to the attitude towards the mother. But it does not also apply to the attitude to the mother. In fact some fundamental differences between men and women must be attributed to this fact. (cited in Sayers, 1991, p. 94)

In her own research, Horney (see Balsam, 2013) concentrated on two ideas that were first voiced by Groddeck: on "the masculine dread of the woman (the mother) or of the female genital" (Horney, 1932, p. 138, and p. 136, Note 5) and on men's "envy of pregnancy". She wrote:

When one begins, as I did, to analyze men only after a fairly long experience of analyzing women, one receives a most surprising impression of the intensity of this envy of pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood, as well as of the breasts and of the act of suckling. (Horney, 1926, pp. 60–61)

In addition, Groddeck's pre-Oedipal and prenatal explorations presaged Melanie Klein's research on pre-Oedipal life and the psychology of children. Klein was an analysand of Ferenczi. Groddeck's "satanarium" influenced the treatment approach later utilized at Simmel's Schloss Tegel in Berlin, the Menninger Clinic in Topeka and Chestnut Lodge in Maryland.

Groddeck—A pioneer of core psychoanalytic concepts

The broad area that the "maternal turn" stimulated was consistent with the later development of "interpersonal" and "two-person" treatment models. Groddeck's "maternal turn" may have been the first step on the path of a developmental model based on early mother–infant interaction. Now observational studies of such interactions are a large field of study whose data are extrapolated to psychoanalysis with adults. So far, only psychosomatics is generally credited to Groddeck. Psychosomatics, like other clinical domains, has been buffeted by political and economic forces (see Brown, 2000).

But along with psychosomatics, Groddeck explored ways of working that were later developed in more depth by others and that ultimately led to numerous further concepts of contemporary psychoanalysis. The links between the work of Groddeck and others are not always clear or direct. Searles (1979, p. 446), however, did credit Groddeck for his pioneering work whereby the patient served as therapist for the physician. The "maternal turn" is central to discovering each of several revolutionary breakthroughs in technique. Evolving from a supermasculine to a supermaternal attitude radically changed Groddeck's (1923) technique to best help patients:

Even to get this amount of insight was difficult, for you will understand that it absolutely reversed my position in regard to a patient. It was no longer important to give him instructions, to prescribe for him what I considered right, but to change in such a way that he could use me ... I changed from an active, exploring physician into a passive instrument (p. 223)

The importance of inner child, play and transitional objects

Groddeck's clinical practice is dominated by the insight that "the most important thing in human life is childhood" (Groddeck, 1987, I, p. 14). Being one of the first psychoanalysts treating children, he tells fascinating case histories about his little patients. A very characteristic example and a "counterstory" to Freud's "Little Hans" (see Hristeva, 2008, p. 453) is the treatment of a child that Groddeck informs his listeners about at his Sanitarium at Marienhöhe on October 16, 1918. The little boy suffered from inexplicable

convulsive seizures following a dream in which he was faced by miniature men pointing a finger at him. Groddeck's hypothesis that the boy must have seen an erect penis was confirmed in the course of the treatment despite the initial resistance of the parents who shared the common belief that "their children must be angels" (Groddeck, 1987, III, p. 853). Since the boy had grown up in Morocco, it turned out that during an official reception at a Sheikh's Palace which he attended with his parents with a subsequent visit to a harem, the boy had seen the host naked. Along with the exotic setting, the story offers an amazing amalgam of many interesting features. Noteworthy is that despite the convulsive seizures, Groddeck (1987) did not classify his patient as neurotic, but as "very charming and so intelligent" (p. 853). As in Freud's (1909) "Little Hans", the disease of the boy was caused by the sight of an animal, since the mother tells Groddeck that her son mistook the naked Sheikh for a monkey with a tail. Yet, most remarkable in Groddeck's history is the total insignificance of the father who plays a central role in Freud's case history of the Little Hans (whereas Freud actually saw Little Hans on only a few occasions and obtained almost the entire history from Max Graf, the father), as well as the close cooperation of the boy's mother with the therapist treating her son. With joint efforts and laughingly, they break the power of the trauma and heal the boy.

Groddeck's most elaborate views on the "child's attitude" that evolved from his "maternal turn" are presented in *The Book of the It*. Consistent with his belief that "for the It, age does not exist" (Groddeck, 1923, p. 20), he delineated the omnipresence of childhood, and grounded human life, even human immortality in it, criticizing at the same time the hypocrisy of modern society with its demands to conceal and leave childhood behind. For Groddeck (1923), childishness is a state "from which we never emerge, for never do we quite grow up ..." (p. 20). Retaining and regaining childishness is the ultimate goal of the treatment, and of human development: "Life begins with childhood, and by a thousand devious paths through maturity attains its single goal, once more to be a child, and the one and only difference between people lies in the fact that some grow childish, and some childlike" (Groddeck, 1923, pp. 20–21). Groddeck's (1923) therapeutic work aimed at restoring and preserving the "inner child" and is marked by the biblical motto: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (p. 223).

Rejecting vehemently objectivity and the reality principle, Groddeck recognized the eminent importance of the pleasure principle and the therapeutic potential of playing. In this, he can be placed next to Hermine Hug-Hellmuth who was another pioneer of play therapy, and preceded Winnicott as an initiator of play therapy. Groddeck wrote:

It is quite unimportant what we play with as long as we play, and people who cannot play, who long for unobtainable playthings instead of making a living doll from a handkerchief, are rather stupid. (quoted in the introduction to Groddeck, 1977, p. 27)

Long before Winnicott (1953) (incidentally the most widely read article in the psychoanalytic literature), Groddeck pointed to the significance of transitional objects in human development and in psychoanalysis, as indicated by Rudnytsky (2002, p. 188) as well. Transitional objects connected to the mother as later described by Winnicott are also the bottle, the doll and the rattle discussed by Groddeck in the above-mentioned letter to Ferenczi of December 12, 1922 (Ferenczi and Groddeck, 2006, p. 81).

Groddeck's correspondence shows that he and his second wife Emmy von Voigt also used to play "doctor and patient" and "mother and child" (Martynkewicz, 1997, pp. 238–239) in order to overcome his own private crisis after his separation from Else von der Goltz. Playing "Mother and Child" is repeatedly mentioned in *The Book of the It*, too (Groddeck, 1923, p. 12). Children's language with the typical transition from the first person singular to the impersonal third person singular became a typical component of Groddeck's therapy and of his writings: "Emmy naughty girl! Smack Emmy!" "Patrik very good. Chocolate!" (Groddeck, 1923, p. 233) As usual, Groddeck thoroughly reversed the perspective, even stating that "we merely play at being grown up as a child plays at being big" (Groddeck, 1923, p. 20).

Not knowing and listening

Groddeck was deeply skeptical of knowledge. One of his favorite maxims was that “all knowledge is patchwork” and that “the X of life cannot be determined” (Groddeck, 2011, p. 32). To him, “knowing” did not mean dissection and analysis but “Wesenschau” -contemplation on the essence of things, human beings and the universe. Also, “knowledge” had to give way to fantasy. In *The Book of the It*, he wrote:

Of the It, we know only so much as lies within our consciousness. Beyond that the greater part of its territory is unattainable, but by search and effort we can extend the limits of our consciousness and press far into the realm of the unconscious, if we can bring ourselves no more to desire knowledge but only to fantasy. (Groddeck, 1923, p. 19)

Due to his rejection of rational, scientific, systematic knowledge and to his “maternal turn” and the acknowledgement of maternal receptivity, Groddeck also recognized the heuristic and therapeutic value of “not knowing”. In so doing, he preceded contemporary literature on that aspect of psychoanalytic technique—for example, Bion’s (1970) recommendation to treat the patient in “the absence of memory and desire ... to achieve the ‘blindness’ that is pre-requisite for ‘seeing’ ... ” (p. 58). In *The Book of the It*, Groddeck (1923) wrote: “But heaven be praised, not only is it unnecessary to understand, but the wish to understand is merely a handicap” (p. 235).

Especially attractive to Groddeck (1923) was childhood amnesia, the state of “not knowing” of early childhood: “Is it not strange that we should know hardly anything of our three first years of life?” (p. 19) He stressed the connection between “not knowing” and the “vital experiences” of childhood (Groddeck, 1923, p. 19) and ranked them higher than the conscious, “knowing” experiences of adult life: “I can well imagine that a child in stumbling across a room for the first time receives a deeper impression than his elders would from a visit to Italy” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 19). The state of “not knowing” is full of profound emotion and is linked with the mother: “I can well imagine that a child who realizes for the first time that the person with the kind smile over there is his mother is more completely gripped by his emotion than the husband who leads his bride home” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 19). For Groddeck, the “unknown treasure heap of memory” and the “wondrous force” of Das Es (Groddeck, 1923, pp. 18–19) cannot be reached via rationality and objectivity but through suspension of “knowing”, through introspection, listening and trying to decipher “the whisper” of the Es. In addition, in his late writings he used to say again and again that faith is more important than knowledge (in his lecture “Fate and Compulsion” 1929 -see Groddeck, 1988, p. 117).

Constructive use of countertransference and enactment

Groddeck viewed treatment as a process of interpersonal communication and interaction. In fact, interpersonal communication was the basis of his psychosomatics as well, since he regarded psychosomatic symptoms not only as meaningful symbols, but as a part of the intercourse between the patient and the therapist. In *The Book of the It*, Groddeck (1923) remarked about his patient Miss G.: “... she responded to my somewhat over strenuous examination with abundant hemorrhages from the bowels and womb ...” (p. 221). Groddeck (1923) was aware of the “mysterious bond” (p. 222) between himself and his patients, so both transference and countertransference became important and interdependent elements of his therapeutic program. He talked openly about his failures as well as his successes. In a talk delivered on October 10, 1917, only a few months after his first letter to Freud, Groddeck tells the story of a male patient who transferred to him his love for his father. Groddeck admits that unfortunately he “overlooked” the father transference of the patient (Groddeck, 1983, II, p. 518) and gives an explanation for this failure that caused the death of the patient: he had “overlooked” that the eyes of the patient reminded him of his own father. Groddeck challenged Freud’s idea of the neutrality of the psychoanalyst, stressed the significance of countertransference and strove to establish a balance between transference and countertransference in the psychoanalytic treatment. In a similar way, he introduced mother transference as an alternative and a counterweight to Freud’s father transference shortly after, as shown above.

Groddeck also constructively used both negative transference and negative countertransference. Asking his patients “What do you have against me?” (see Will, 1984, p. 165) is an impressive proof of this unique attitude. In 1917, Groddeck declared in regard to the therapeutic situation: “It is not true that I must love the people who love me. On the contrary, such a sympathy is often a handicap” (Groddeck, 1983, II, p. 519). Since he knew that “words are fixed and rigid” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 216), in his clinical practice Groddeck gave preference to nonverbal communication, to repetition and reliving through acting, thus pioneering in the recognition and use of enactment, too (see Renik, 1993). Due to his maternal perspective and his concept of *Das Es*, he underscored the intersubjective components and the symmetry of the enactment by paying special attention to the coacting and the counteracting of the therapist. A striking example of countertransference enactment is presented in Groddeck’s (1923) *The Book of the It* where Patrik Troll is treating a woman with a bad knee, then rides his bike and falls off, injuring his own knee and with further self-analysis is better able to help her.

Two-person exploration and mutual analysis

After the therapist’s transformation into a “mother-doctor” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 224), the patient became a teacher to him and opened up new insights and prospects for him, teaching him (see also Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 192) to see and feel the symbols (“I learned to recognize the symbol”, Groddeck, 1923, p. 224), and “the force of association” (Groddeck, 1923, p. 225). Thus the patient became a therapist of the physician as well. Searles (1979) famously wrote about the patient as therapist for the analyst (p. 446), and credited Groddeck’s (1923) pioneering this in *The Book of the It*:

And now I was confronted with the strange fact that I was not treating the patient, but that the patient was treating me; or, to translate it into my own language, the It of this fellow-being tried so to transform my It, did in fact so transform it, that it came to be useful for its purpose. (p. 223)

Unconscious communication between the therapist and the patient, including tolerance to “not understanding the patient’s communications” (Rudnytsky, 2002, p. 95), listening together to the voices of *Das Es* both of the patient and of the doctor (Groddeck, 1923, p. 223) are the basis of an unorthodox, innovative and fruitful therapeutic interaction which set the beginning of mutual analysis and preceded the “mutual analysis” practiced by Ferenczi (1932) in his treatment of Elisabeth Severn and recorded in his *Clinical Diary*. Ferenczi and Groddeck themselves treated each other during Ferenczi’s visits to Groddeck’s sanitarium in Baden-Baden (Poster, 2009, p. 199). Groddeck (1923) described the procedure, the essence and the therapeutic results of the mutual treatment in *The Book of the It*:

So far as helpful activities go, I am hopelessly lost; I avoid giving advice, I take pains to free myself as quickly as possible from any unconscious opposition to the It of the patient and its wishes; in so doing I feel happy. I see results, and have myself become healthy. (p. 223)

Problems associated with the overreaching of mutual analysis were exposed by that failed experiment. Nevertheless, there is a growing literature focusing on the importance of appreciating the two-person nature of any psychoanalytic engagement (see Ehrenberg, 1984) and on the role of the “sensitivity” of the analyst as a “fundamental analytic instrument” (see Galdi, 1999, p. 297). Thus, mutual analysis was a failed but experimentally productive experience (Castillo Mendoza, 2012).

FREUD, GRODDECK AND THE “BEDROCK”

Groddeck was not part of a group, he never established a school, and he introduced himself as a “wild analyst” at the 6th International Psychoanalytic Congress in The Hague in 1920 in spite of the fact that he had been accepted and welcomed by Freud. Yet, with his remarkable evolution from a paternal to a maternal

model, Groddeck radically changed his understanding of the “meaning of illness” and of the tasks and prospects of psychoanalytic and psychosomatic therapy.

Although he stuck to paternalistic psychoanalysis and father transference, Freud was preoccupied with the challenges and the threats of “the feminine”, too. Due to the contributions of Ferenczi (1924, 1930, 1932), Ferenczi and Groddeck (2006), Ferenczi and Rank (1923), Freud not only admitted that parts of the ego can be unconscious and accepted the central role of “the individuality of the analyst” (Freud, 1937, p. 247) in the psychoanalytic treatment, but he also struggled to find an answer to the “riddle” (Freud, 1937, p. 252) of gender. Thus, in his essay “Analysis Terminable and Interminable” (1937), he tried to detect common ground for men and women and declared that the “repudiation of the feminine” was “bedrock”, a firm “biological fact” (Freud, 1937, p. 252) valid for both genders. However, by positing that the “bedrock” was an obstacle blocking both the psychoanalytic treatment and women’s path to femininity and maternity, Freud expected psychoanalysis to help women overcome and “master” (Freud, 1937, p. 252) the “bedrock”.

In his lifelong effort to evolve his theory and technique (see Makari, 2008), Freud shared a rare capacity with Groddeck. Both men evolved and altered their own theories over their lifetimes. Groddeck’s “maternal turn” influenced directly Ferenczi, Horney, Fromm-Reichmann and, through them and their followers, generations of psychoanalysts in both theory and practice. He had a lasting influence on the evolution of psychoanalysis, even if the links to subsequent developments are not always direct and clear and may have been transmitted out of awareness through multiple generations of psychoanalysis (see Falzeder, 1998). The “maternal qualities” introduced by Groddeck remain central to what are now widely accepted in many schools of psychoanalysis -the importance of counter-transference, enactment, intersubjectivity, receptivity, empathy, play, and so on. Each of these are associated with a different psychoanalytic pioneer, but Groddeck laid the groundwork and enriched and invigorated psychoanalysis with his new and fresh theoretical and clinical ideas.

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