

**THE TOOL FOR CHANGE: THE FANTASY.
THE FAMILY ROMANCE OF THE ANALYST.
(THE FANTASIES OF THE ANALYST AND OF THE CLIENT IN
PSYCHOTHERAPY)**

The purpose of each analytic process is change, which is comparable to the events of the socialization process, however differing from that in at least two particular points. First: the analysis creates change by transforming the unconscious substance into a conscious one, whereas the change caused by the socialization process happens post factum, and it may never become conscious. Second: fantasy is highlighted in the analysis; we can say that fantasy is the basis of the change, the cause of the change, the catalyst of the analysis. It is not only the client's fantasy that is important, but also the analyst's fantasy, which is at least as important. In the socialization process, fantasy has only a subordinate role; the emphasis is on the conscious environmental influence. However, fantasy has a role here too, particularly the fantasy of the primer group (the family), which has its effect in such a hidden way that it rarely becomes conscious. As a consequence, in some cases, an observer, far away from the direct environment, is able to notice the hidden fantasy lying behind the educational influence of the family, sooner than the educators themselves.

As we know, two individuals participate in the psychoanalytic process: the analysed and the analyst. The psychoanalytic process is independent from whether the analysed individual is somebody who needs help to solve her problems, or, beyond this, she would like to learn from her psychoanalyst, as she would like to be an analyst too. These two types of analyses differ from each other only in length, so distinction between them will not be made. But first, let us define **what fantasy is**.

Fantasies are **scenic concentrates of conscious and unconscious processes** of defence mechanisms, and conflicts, which stem from latent learning. The birth of fantasy is promoted by latent learning, but also influenced by the manifestations of the environment. Fantasy is not only intrapsychic, but it has interpersonal influence as well, which can often be seen in politics. The fantasies about the 'beloved leader' can be created artificially – we call it propaganda, which can mobilize masses of people and can become a collective fantasy. Fantasy has an effect on the interpersonal relationship in analysis, and because of this, the analyst does not appear in his mundane reality in the creative fantasy of the client, which can be utilized in the transference. The client intensely shields the fantasized image of her analyst.

The freely soaring fantasy (free association) has been named as a tool for change, though the decline of it, or its inability to function are the barriers of change. The catalyst and the moderator of the free flow of associations is the analyst, who grants the proper atmosphere for the analysed by being neutral. By this, the client's feeling of security can be formed. Security is based on the client's fantasy that she does not have to be afraid of the analyst, moreover, the analyst protects her – if it is necessary – from even the trauma caused by herself. The Budapest School was different from the Freudian method from the very beginning, since Freud tried to explore the traumas experienced in childhood by frustrating the analysed. Later on, Kohut and

the Self Psychology also applied a therapeutic method different from the Freudian one, in which the Freudian 'guilty man' image was replaced by the image of the 'tragic man', aiming to heal the tragic man suffering from narcissist injuries of early childhood.

The role of fantasy is not only the visualization of an inside event, but it is also the manifestation of the corresponding script. If it is not possible, the fantasies disappear in the unconscious. The role of fantasy has the same function in early childhood as adult thinking has later – therefore the latter can be interpreted as the modified version of unconscious fantasies.

Fantasies can be classified in different groups on the basis of their **content**: there are aggressive-destructive, pregenital, oedipal, narcissist, and also those related to family (the shared fantasies of family members also belong here – they are the so called 'family stories'). Some formations which are built up by hierarchically linking the units of these fantasies can also be observed. When real perception is not possible, some mysterious hiatuses are generated regarding birth, sexuality, and death. These hiatuses are filled by fantasy activity, and by this the so-called infantile theories come about.

By interpreting it structurally, fantasy is a formation which is created in affective interaction between the individual and the object. Its conscious quality spreads from the unconscious to total consciousness, and can be a playful-flexible elaboration, but also a rigid pseudo-rule following unit. It can serve defense, adaptation, or even psychic processing. In the analysis, the analyst interprets fantasies by converting them into symbolic stories. His neutrality supports our fantasy that during the analysis we talk with ourselves (our personal unconscious) instead of the analyst. If we talked to our analyst in a way that we could not hear what we say, perhaps we would be able to experience the feeling of security more easily, but in that case, it would not be possible to make our unconscious sphere conscious. According to it, our analyst – to a certain extent – becomes a part of our unconscious. Despite his neutrality, he is not passive, rather active, but his activity starts to function if the conversation with ourselves needs to be motivated (for example in the case of a massive defense).

The fantasy of the client might give a diagnostic starting point, so we can draw conclusions regarding her needs and tensions. Fantasies evolve continuously during the development of the child and during the analysis. If fantasies have an uncontrollable pressure on behaviour, they create the condition for the birth of a pathologic (perverse, sadistic) behaviour. "In our intrapsychic reality, the internalized father might get the victim of a murder, robbery, banishment, chopping, - at the same time he can evoke positive emotions in us, if the internalized father appears as a real, living man who protects us" – writes Winnicott (1976) – and this fantasized father might appear as a fantasized living man in the person of the analyst.

The analyst's moderating activity is limited when the analysed is not able to associate freely or to verbalize her fantasies, since in this case the analysed might take the analyst's help as a correction or 'pedagogic help' instead of her own creative acts. As a consequence, it might activate another defense mechanism, first of all the intellectualization.

As already mentioned, in the client's fantasy, or in her subjective perception, the image of the analyst sometimes alters from reality. It is not helpful to influence this: let us remain neutral, do not intend to look different from the way our client wants to see us. Mostly she or he fantasizes about us as a father or mother, sometimes as a friend, and we have to work with this fantasy. But if she wants to transpose her fantasy into reality, (for example she wants to

build an informal relationship) it is not appropriate to obey. This wish signals her anxiety, and by fulfilling the wish we reduce the feeling of security which can be achieved in the therapeutic relationship. Therefore, in order to protect the transference, it is expedient to avoid a complementary relationship. By this, we take the responsibility of authority, and reduce the insecurity of the client which expresses her fear that she was not able to trust her parents, and now she is not able to trust her parents' representatives – us.

An example justifies experimentally what is mentioned above; the role of the old Golda Meir was acted successfully by Ingrid Bergman in one of her films. Two years later, when a public opinion researcher measured what Golda Meir's fantasized image was like, for most of the respondents the young Ingrid Bergman's face appeared, even if they had read about the old Meir and had seen her photographs around that time.



After all this, let us look at a characteristic form of fantasies: the neurotic family romance. Freud (1908/1909) noticed a type of fantasy appearing during daydreaming, which first appear during the period of sibling rivalry. These fantasies contain the feeling of being neglected, and envious. However, they are mostly characterized by the thought that the blood parent is replaced by a more illustrious person who has a higher social status, who becomes a 'real' blood father in the fantasy of the child. Freud called these fantasies, which later appeared in the analysis too, the 'family romance of the neurotic'.

The psychogenesis of the family romance begins when the child notices the sexuality of the parents, and her fantasy gets sexualized. The child places the mother – who is the object of the child's yearning and curiosity – into a situation in which she is presented in the role of the adulterous wife, who is the protagonist of secret romantic relationships, and she fantasizes herself as the offspring of such a relationship. In this period, a wish for revenge and retaliation can be seen: the child who had become disappointed by the parents' lack of perfection takes revenge this way. The children who were born later try to diminish the rights of their older siblings, as well as increasing their own legitimacy, and by this they intensify the fantasies of the older siblings. After a while, it turns out in the analysis that the replacement of the devaluated father-figure with a more illustrious one is nothing more than the yearning for a previously pleasant and carefree life period when the child's fantasies displayed only admiration; when in the fantasy the father was the strongest and the most powerful, and the mother was the most beautiful and kindest woman in the world.

After the childhood fantasies, let us examine the fantasies of the analysts, which can more or less be compared to the fantasies of the socializing process. As it is known, to become an analyst it is necessary to absolve one's own-experience (personal) analysis, then a learning analysis, and finally two supervisions. For this, almost as much time is needed as with becoming an adult from a child. At the beginning of the analysis we idealize our analyst, but as the child

learns to doubt the perfection of the parent, the analysed also notices the faults of the analyst, and starts to judge him.

In a well-functioning analysis – after the so-called “analytic honeymoon” (by Ferenczi) – a negative transference appears, and the analysed starts to devalue the analyst. In parallel, she starts to rival with the coach-siblings, and fantasizes about who the cleverest, most beloved child is, and who is the one the analyst appreciates the least, does not like, or considers to be unintelligent. All this prepares the independence process, which can be compared to the endeavour to be independent during the socializing process. Sometimes, detachment does not happen in the analysis, just like in the case of the socialization process. Socialization does not ensure that the person becomes autonomous after growing into an adult from a child. For this, a good parent is needed, who does not tie the child to herself, instead her aim is to prepare the child for independence. The task of the analyst is similar to a good parent’s task: he leads his student to a point where analytic thinking – built in the analysed/analyst cognitive activity – starts to function at the right moment as had been programmed. Reaching this milestone, we can say that the client got to a point in the process of the analysis where she is able to go on with the analytic activity independently, but not without help. At this phase, a so-called learning analysis can start, and from this time on the personal analysis is enriched with educational motifs as well.

At the onset of the first supervisory case, the person of the analyst changes, which is an ordeal for both participants. In the fantasy of the present-candidate, but the future-analyst, the memories of her socialising process and her personal analysis also come up. During her theoretical education she meets her couch-siblings (they introduce themselves, since up until that point they had only seen each other in the street leading to the analyst), and in their fantasies the first motifs of the ‘analytic-family romance’ appear. In the theoretical training, the earlier only fantasized rivalry is transferred into the level of reality. In the seminars, apart from the coach-siblings, other ‘more distant relatives’ (the students of other analysts: coach-cousins) are also present, and the transference not elaborated in the analysis might display in the form of devoted ‘student – faithfulness’.

The chapter of the candidate’s family romance, induced by the change of her analyst during her supervision, is worth mentioning. If her family romance motifs were not elaborated properly in the learning-analysis, the desire to find the beloved and lost object may be revived, or the endeavour of repairing the narcissist trauma caused by losing illusions may appear in the fantasy of the prospective analyst. The so-called ‘rescue fantasies’ often appear, whose gist is represented by the ‘endeavour to rescue the fragile woman’ metaphor by Freud (1910). According to Freud, the woman to rescue (or the client to rescue) represents the mother of the analyst, and her ‘rescue’ symbolizes the rivalry with the oedipal father and the (unconscious) possession of the mother.

Frosch (1959) adapts this to the training of the analysts: “Just as several clients suffer from the trauma caused by the failed sublimation, the prospective analyst might also suffer from it”. Whereas, in the analysis, the appearance of some motifs of the family romance supports the elaboration of remorse, in the supervision this – in the form of transference – can be projected to the person treated by the candidate, and can appear as the client’s problem. Although it is usually interpreted as the unelaborated difficulty of the analyst, it might become questionable: is supervision a proper forum for the follow-up elaboration of personal problems? Namely, the

problem is already very compounded this time: it is not always obvious who the person to rescue (to get back? to keep? to possess?) is in the prospective analyst's fantasy; perhaps her client, mother/father, supervisor? If the rescue fantasies persist unelaborate deeply in the unconscious, they may enhance the unconscious motifs, both for the family romance and the disciple loyalty. Not only does amplify the 'analyst's family romance' but secondarily it intensifies the group cohesion too, which can be manifested in the close bonds between certain psychoanalytic schools, though in an unfavourable situation it might get manifested in their antagonism.

Finally, the time of the exam arrives. In big organisations, where more training centres operate (for example in England and Germany) the exam is a confirmation, in every sense of the word. It is a hard ordeal, which is necessarily loaded by the personal and the analytic family romance of the examiner. However, the examiner instructor analyst has already absolved three exams; he is a human too, and as Freud claims (1937): "perfectly analysed man does not exist" – in other words: not all analyses have perfect results. In debates heard at the exams of the aforementioned big organisations – just like in our national university, PhD, or academic exams – the presence of the unprocessed family romance fantasies can often be discovered. In the debates, one or another opponent's 'rescue fantasy', or his (mental) fight with his fantasized rival can be seen. Since there is no place for analytic interpretation either at the university or at the Academy, the unprocessed emotions might be projected to the examinee, and in worst case not only in the form of fantasy (like the childish revenge, described by Freud, on the frustrating parent) but in some cases in the numeric form of the exam result. If the examinee is wounded, or she felt she was in a handicapped situation, she can ask for an admission (or she can win a free ticket) to the "rival family", which is in opposition with the family of the examiner: the university department, the workplace, or the analytic school. Just like in the case of partner choice, also in the case of choosing the analyst, one or another trait of the lost parent can be found again, and what was found in her analyst earlier, now the graduated analyst thinks to find it in her group. The graduated colleague, who already has a licence, takes all this to her chosen group in her family romance fantasy.

We began at the side of the fantasy, described as the catalyst of change. Because of the shortage of time, one could only share extracts of the whole story about change created during the process. Now I only have time to repeat and bring to your attention an important sentence already mentioned in the introduction: "When real perception is not possible some mysterious hiatuses are generated, which are filled by fantasy activity". Furthermore, I have to leave it to your own fantasies, how to fill these hiatuses.

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