

# **A life inscribed within the crucible of the history of the psychoanalytic movement**

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Very little is known of the childhood of Sándor (Alexander) Ferenczi, the eighth child of a family of 12, born in Miskolcz, Hungary on 7 July 1873.

Sándor's father, Bernát Fraenkel, was a Polish Jewish immigrant born in Cracow in 1830. Sustained by his enthusiasm for the liberal and progressive national Hungarian Revolution of 1848, he took part at the age of 18 in the Hungarian insurrection against Austrian domination. Thereafter, he settled in Miskolcz, where he became the manager, and later the owner, of a bookshop, to which he added a printing press, which enabled him subsequently to practise the profession of printer and publisher. In 1879, he Magyarised his name Fraenkel into Ferenczi. In 1880, he was elected President of the Chamber of Commerce in Miskolcz. He died in 1888, when Sándor was 15. Family testimonies suggest that Sándor was his father's favourite child.

It was Sándor's mother, Rosa Eibenschütz, born in 1840 and married in 1858, who, on her husband's death, took over the task of running the bookshop and printing press, managing them both successfully.

Owing to his father's profession and cultural interests, it seems that Sándor Ferenczi's childhood was spent in an intellectually stimulating environment, from which he benefited: he was a brilliant pupil at the Protestant College in his town and, as an adolescent, wrote poems in the style of Heine and carried out experiments in hypnosis. At the end of his secondary studies, he left for Vienna to do medical studies, receiving his medical degree in 1894. After completing his military service in the Austro-Hungarian army, he established himself in Budapest. In 1897 he started working as an intern at the St Rokus hospital in a service for prostitutes, before moving on to a neurological and psychiatric unit at the St Elisabeth poor house in 1900. Then, in 1904, he entered the clinic of a health insurance cooperative. He became an expert court medical witness in 1905, a post he gave up after the First

World War. He set up his own practice in 1900, working as a general practitioner and neuropsychiatrist.

Before his first meeting with Freud, at the beginning of 1908, Ferenczi had published, among other things, a certain number of articles that clearly evoked his early interests for problems of a psychic order and neuropathic affections: 'Consciousness and development' (1900), 'The love of the sciences' (1901), 'Female homosexuality' (1902), 'Saturnine encephalopathy' (1903), 'On the therapeutic value of hypnosis' (1904), 'On neurasthenia' (1905a), 'On sexual transitional stages' (1905b) and 'Treatment with hypnotic suggestion' (1906).

Ferenczi, whose mind was cultivated, eclectic and insatiably curious but nonetheless 'restless', as he would later describe himself, was a man whose sensibility, strong personality and desire to 'take care of others' soon led him to acquire significant medical, psychiatric and therapeutic experience. He had already read Freud and Breuer by the age of 20, but, as he was to report later, neither of these readings had interested him particularly: 'In 1893, I had read the paper he wrote, along with Breuer, concerning the psychic mechanism of hysterical symptoms, and, later, another independent paper in which he discusses infantile sexual dreams as the causes or starting-points for the psycho-neuroses' (Ferenczi, 1926b, p. 31). It was not until he became interested in Jung's timed associative methods and, with the encouragement of a colleague, Philippe Stein, that he took up his reading of Freud again, in particular *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900a); 'this time the effect was electric' (Jones, 1955, p. 39).

When Ferenczi sought to meet Freud, who responded favourably by suggesting that he came to Vienna on Sunday, 2 February 1908, it was the opportunity for Ferenczi to emerge from his 'splendid isolation'. Since 1904, a relatively important group of pupils and disciples had been gathering around Freud regularly at the evenings of the Psychological Wednesday Society. Karl Abraham, Max Eitingon, and C.J. Jung were to join this group in 1907 and were followed in 1908 by A.A. Brill, Sándor Ferenczi, Ernest Jones and Victor Tausk (Jones, 1955, p. 9).

This meeting was decisive. Michael Balint writes that Freud 'was apparently so impressed by Ferenczi that he invited him to present a paper at the 1st Psychoanalytic Congress in Salzburg in April 1908, and to join him in Berchtesgaden where Freud's family were planning to spend their summer holidays – an unprecedented event' (Balint, 1964, p. 9). Ernest Jones adds that Ferenczi 'soon become a special favourite' (Jones, 1955, p. 39).

From that moment up until 1933, the year of his death, the thread of Ferenczi's biography may be seen as being woven around the development of the extremely close ties that he maintained with the founder of psychoanalysis, and as overlapping with the history of the psychoanalytic movement, of which he immediately became one of its most distinguished members. Today this history can be followed almost from day by day thanks to the correspondence exchanged between Freud and Ferenczi, which contains almost 1,250 letters (Freud and Ferenczi, *Correspondence*, vols. 1–3, 1992, 1996, 2000). This correspondence constitutes one of the most precious sources of information that we possess today concerning the private lives of the two men. Comparing it with other epistolary exchanges that Freud maintained, Jones writes that Freud's letters to Ferenczi are 'by far the most personal' (Jones, 1955, p. 176).

From their very first exchanges, Ferenczi was immediately and powerfully mobilised by a massive and idealising transference onto Freud, who, as we know, never left his interlocutors feeling indifferent. This massive transference was duplicated by an immediate transference onto psychoanalysis and its corpus, which were inseparable at that time from the man Freud. Helped by Ferenczi's remarkable aptitude to put the Freudian ferment to full use immediately – one only needs to recall the 'master stroke' of his article entitled 'Introjection and transference' (1909a), which was written one year after his meeting with Freud – this situation did not fail to seduce Freud immediately. From then on, an exceptional bond was formed between the two protagonists.

Truly a case of 'love at first sight', Freud and Ferenczi's relationship was strengthened by numerous common points and centres of interest that inspired them. Freud very swiftly discovered in Ferenczi the immense aptitudes for becoming a practitioner as well as a theoretician of psychoanalysis of the first order; moreover, he saw him as one of those who would prove to be the most prepared to get involved in all the battles for the Cause (*die Sache*). Ferenczi, for his part, found in Freud a 'father' who was apparently not afraid to lean on a 'son' and who even seemed to be able to tolerate all the stages of Ferenczi's struggle to assert himself and his independence.

However, Ferenczi's character, which was enthusiastic, sensitive and generous, hungry for recognition and affection, and dominated by great spontaneity of impulse, sometimes met with a lack of reciprocity on Freud's part. Although communicative and warm,

Freud often took refuge behind his seriousness and thus imposed a kind of distance that was all the greater in that he tried to find in Ferenczi a 'son' who would sometimes be less sensitive and more independent. This difference in the way they managed their sensibility, which underlay their respective modes of thought, was at the root of some of the difficulties which at certain times marked their relationship.

In April 1908, Ferenczi presented his paper 'Psycho-analysis and education' (1908) at the 1st International Congress in Salzburg, Austria. Freud spoke for five hours about the treatment of the 'Rat Man'. There were seven other presentations, including one by Jung on dementia praecox. During the summer, Ferenczi spent his holidays with Freud at Berchtesgaden.

In 1909, at the end of the summer, Ferenczi left for America with Freud, who had been invited by Stanley Hall, the President of Clark University, Worcester (Massachusetts) to give a series of lectures on the occasion of the University's celebration of the twentieth year of its foundation (Freud, 1910a [1909]). Jung, who had also been invited, made the trip with them. During the crossing on the *George Washington*, Freud, Ferenczi and Jung analysed each other's dreams. On their return from America, the tone of the epistolary exchanges between Freud and Ferenczi became warmer, a clear sign that the two men had established a much closer relationship. It was also at this time that Freud admitted to Ferenczi, who had congratulated him on the marriage of his elder daughter, Mathilde, to Robert Hollistcher, that the year before, in Berchtesgaden, he would have been glad if he had been the lucky one. At the end of the year, Ferenczi published 'Introjection and transference' (1909a).

The year 1910 saw the 2nd International Congress, which was held in Nuremburg (Germany). Jung became the first President of the International Psychoanalytic Association, whose creation Ferenczi had proposed. It was at this Congress that he presented his text, published the following year, 'On the organization of the psychoanalytic movement' (1911a).

In August, Freud and Ferenczi went off to visit Florence, Rome, Naples, Palermo and Syracuse. It was during this trip that the so called 'Palermo incident' occurred. This episode remained an important event in their relationship over the next 20 years and they often referred back to it at times of difficulty between them. This journey they made together for more than three weeks turned out to be a disappointment

for both of them, as can be seen from Freud's letter to Jung, dated 24 September 1910:

My travelling companion is a dear fellow, but dreamy in a disturbing kind of way, and his attitude towards me is infantile. He never stops admiring me, which I don't like, and is probably sharply critical of me in his unconscious when I am taking it easy. He has been too passive and receptive, letting everything be done for him like a woman, and I really haven't got enough homosexuality in me to accept him as one. These trips arouse a great longing for a real woman.

(McGuire, 1974, p. 353)

Jones comments on the incident in the following manner:

In Sicily ... Ferenczi was inhibited, sulky and unreliable ... he was haunted by a quite inordinate and insatiable longing for his father's love ... His demands for intimacy had no bounds. There was to be no privacy and no secret between him and Freud. Naturally he could not express any of this openly, so he waited more or less hopefully for Freud to make the first move.

(Jones, 1955, p. 91)

On their return, Freud responded to Ferenczi's repeated apologies in a letter dated 6 October 1910:

I no longer have any need for that full opening of my personality, but you have also understood it and correctly returned to its traumatic cause. Why did you thus make a point of it? This need has been extinguished in me since Fliess's case, with the overcoming of which you just saw me occupied. A piece of homosexual investment has been withdrawn and utilized for the enlargement of my own ego. I have succeeded where the paranoiac fails.

(Freud and Ferenczi, 1992, p. 22)

However, this incident would not prevent them, subsequently, from going on holiday together.

In 1911, at Easter, Ferenczi joined Freud in Bolzano to help him rent a villa for the summer. In August, Ferenczi spent a fortnight with the

Freuds in the Dolomites. On 21 and 22 September, the 3rd International Congress was held in Weimar (Germany), at which Ferenczi presented a milestone paper on homosexuality: 'The nosology of male homosexuality (homoerotism)' (1914a). At the same Congress, Freud presented his hypotheses on *Schreber*.

At the end of the year, an important event occurred that was to play a major part in relations between Freud and Ferenczi during the year 1912, as well as in the following years. Since 1904, Ferenczi had been having an affair with a married woman, Gizella Pálos, the mother of two daughters, Elma and Magda (who would marry one of Ferenczi's younger brothers, Lajos). The affair with Ferenczi remained more or less clandestine, owing to the fact that Gizella's husband, Géza Pálos, refused to divorce her. Gizella was eight years older than Ferenczi and could no longer have a child. Elma was a young woman much in demand, but unstable sentimentally. Gizella was concerned about her daughter's emotional instability and Ferenczi, wishing to make amends, decided in July 1911 to take Elma into analysis. A few months later, Ferenczi informed Freud about the 'failure' of his analytic neutrality towards his young patient, with whom he had begun an affair. In a state of complete distress and confusion, Ferenczi wanted to get out of the impasse in which he found himself and so turned to Freud, asking him if he would agree to take Elma into analysis himself, something which Freud, who was initially very reticent, finally agreed to do.

The year 1912 saw the friendship between the two men sorely tested, for it was infiltrated by Ferenczi's fluctuations and interminable hesitations in choosing between Elma and Gizella, the latter of whom was prepared to sacrifice her own happiness for the sake of her daughter's. This embroilment and the complexity of the situation led Ferenczi to admit, in a letter dated 8 March 1912, that his difficulties were directly linked to his unconscious hostile impulses towards Freud: 'You were right, when, on my first trip to Vienna where I revealed to you my intention to marry, you called attention to the fact that you noticed the same defiant expression I had on my face when I refused to work with you in Palermo' (Freud and Ferenczi, 1992, p. 353).

Elma's analysis with Freud lasted for three months, from January to the end of March 1912. At the end of her analysis with Freud, Ferenczi, in order to assure himself about the depth of Elma's feelings for him, took her back into analysis with him between the end of April and August. It was when Ferenczi was able to adopt an

interpretation suggested by Freud concerning his 'maternal complex' that he put an end to his relationship with Elma, both at the analytic and sentimental level. Elma got married shortly after to an American by the name of Laurvik. Ferenczi's hesitations and prevarications regarding Gizella, whose age continued to be a problem for him, but whom he nonetheless married in 1919, were not over. However, they would never completely overcome this crisis; Gizella, who was hurt, remained divided between her love for Ferenczi and her maternal love.

It was in January 1912, at a time when Ferenczi was bogged down in sentimental conflicts, that the Jung affair began, creating the spectre of serious dissensions with him. In a letter dated 23 January 1912, Freud wrote to Ferenczi: 'The prospect, as long as I live, of doing everything myself and then not leaving behind any sterling successor is not very consoling ... Now I am leaning on you again, and I confidently hope that you will not disappoint me' (Freud and Ferenczi, 1992, pp. 333–334). To this suggestion that he might one day have to consider taking over the role of successor from Jung, Ferenczi, who was entirely wrapped up in his personal difficulties, replied that for the moment he did not feel that he was the right man for the job. The year passed, while the clouds were gathering around Jung, who, according to Freud, had become *meschugge* ('barking mad' in yiddish), and a storm erupted at the end of 1912 on the occasion of a letter written by Jung to Freud in which he reproached Freud for treating his pupils as his patients and for not having overcome his neurosis through his own self-analysis.

In July, Jones had the idea of creating a 'Secret Committee' consisting of Ferenczi, Karl Abraham, Otto Rank, Hans Sachs and Ernest Jones, which would gather around Freud with the aim of protecting his oeuvre. When Freud learnt of this, he wrote to Jones: 'I daresay it would make living and dying easier for me if I knew of such an association existing to watch over my creation' (Jones, 1955, p. 173). The Committee gathered the following year and elected Jones as its president.

The Hungarian group of psychoanalysts, of which Ferenczi was the first president, was founded on 19 May 1913. On 25 May, at the first meeting of the Committee, Freud offered a ring to each of its members. During June and July, Jones moved to Budapest to carry out his analysis with Ferenczi. In July, tensions between Freud and Jung increased. In August, Freud made the acquaintance of Sándor Ferenczi's mother.

In September, the 4th International Psychoanalytic Congress was held in Munich (Germany) under the presidency of Jung, who, the following year, broke with Freud and resigned from his position as president. Freud asked Ferenczi to write a critique of Jung's book, *Symbols and Transformations of the Libido* (1912), which was published in the same year.

In April 1914, Karl Abraham became the President of the International Psychoanalytical Association. In that same year, Melanie Klein, who had been living in Budapest with her husband since 1910, began her analysis with Ferenczi.

The entry of Austria-Hungary into the First World War gave Ferenczi the opportunity, while waiting to be mobilised as a military doctor, of beginning his analysis with Freud in October 1914, for two sessions a day for three weeks.

The First World War allowed the two men to get to know each other much more closely. Freud's isolation, imposed by the conflict, led him naturally to communicate with his Hungarian disciple and friend all the more frequently, particularly as it was difficult during all these years to have exchanges with psychoanalysts who did not live in the countries that comprised the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy). However, this period, which was dark and depressing from many points of view, did not prevent Freud from being very creative and productive and from sharing his advances, without restriction, with Ferenczi; in return, the latter translated Freud into Hungarian, told him about his writing projects and sent him his articles.

The year 1915 was one of great creativity for the two correspondents: Freud wrote 12 metapsychological articles which were supposed to form part of a large comprehensive volume that was never published – Freud only published six of them – whereas Ferenczi, stationed in the garrison town of Papa, where Freud stayed with him for two weeks in October 1915, was laying down the first foundations of his great 'phylogenetic fantasy' *Thalassa*, which was to be published in 1924. That same year, Freud began his course of *Introductory Lessons in Psychoanalysis* in Vienna.

In 1916, Ferenczi, who was still wrapped up in his sentimental problems, resumed his analysis with Freud for a little over three weeks between June and July, then once again for 15 days at the beginning of October. But even after this, Ferenczi still did not have the feeling that he could see a solution to his conflicts. He asked Freud if he thought he should continue his analysis; Freud's answer, in a letter



dated 16 November 1916, was irrevocable: 'You know that I consider your attempt at analysis finished — finished, not terminated' (Freud and Ferenczi, 1996, p. 153).<sup>1</sup>

At the end of 1916, Freud suggested to Ferenczi that they co-author an article, or perhaps a book, on 'Lamarck and psychoanalysis', a proposal Ferenczi accepted. During this period, Ferenczi was prey to various symptoms of a somatic order which he associated with his hypochondria, but a permanent tachycardia led him to evoke a diagnosis of Basedow's disease.

From January to April 1917, Ferenczi, whose condition was worsening, stayed in a sanatorium in Semmering. After his recovery and return to Budapest, he organised a summer retreat with Freud in Hungary (in Csorbato). Ferenczi, Gizella and the Freuds spent July together there.

Following the armistice in 1918, both the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Association and the International Psychoanalytic Association underwent a renaissance. The 5th International Congress was held in Budapest (Hungary) on 28–29 September 1918. During this Congress, Ferenczi was elected President of the International Psychoanalytic Association. On Freud's advice, and for international political reasons, Ferenczi handed over the presidency to Jones at the following Congress. In December, in Budapest, under the auspices of the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Association, Ferenczi gave a lecture called 'On the technique of psychoanalysis' (1919d), which marked the beginning of a long series of contributions on technique.

During 1918 and 1919, Freud and Ferenczi were constantly in touch regarding the subject of the state of health of Anton (Toni) von Freund, who was suffering from cancer. The endearing personality of this former Hungarian brewer and benefactor, who converted to psychoanalysis, had attracted the friendship of both Ferenczi and Freud.

On 1 March 1919, Ferenczi married Gizella Pálos. The same day, Géza Pálos, from whom Gizella had been divorced for more than six months, died from a heart attack.

At the end of March 1919, the Hungarian revolution was a cause of concern for Ferenczi, but, as the students had signed a petition in favour of teaching psychoanalysis at the University of Budapest, it gave him the possibility of teaching at the University. He was nonetheless obliged to give up his teaching during the counter-revolution (the 'White Terror') in August 1919, for this period led to open anti-Semitism, arbitrary arrests and executions on a massive scale.

In January 1920, Freud and Ferenczi were both deeply affected by the news of the death of Anton von Freund. In September, the 6th

International Congress was held in The Hague (the Netherlands). Ferenczi, who was president, presented a report: 'Further development of the "active therapy" in psychoanalysis' (1920).

In his opening address, Ferenczi welcomed the 'unshakeable fidelity' of the international psychoanalytic movement attested to by the participation of American, English, Austrian, German, Dutch, Hungarian, Polish and Swiss psychoanalysts at the Congress.

The first volume of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* also appeared in 1920, which began with an open letter by Ferenczi.

In August 1921, Ferenczi decided to meet Groddeck and to stay 'as a colleague as much as a patient' in his Sanatorium in Baden-Baden. In September, he travelled with Freud in the Harz Mountains with all the members of the 'Committee'.

On Christmas Day 1921, Ferenczi sent Groddeck a long self-analytic letter in which he referred to his childhood, which was marked by his mother's lack of tenderness and excessive severity, the 'Palermo incident', and his inhibition in writing 'the great, indeed a "grand" theory that genital development evolved as a reaction on the part of animals to the threat of dehydration whilst adapting to life on land' (Ferenczi and Groddeck, 2002, p. 10).

In January 1922, Ferenczi gave two lectures in Vienna, one of which was on Freud's *Metapsychological Papers*, to an audience of English and Americans who were training in analysis by undertaking an analysis with Freud. At the end of February, he sent a letter to Groddeck in which he wrote:

Prof. Freud considered my overall physical symptoms for one or two hours; he persists in his original view that the crux of the matter is my hatred for *him*, because he stopped me (just like her father did before him) from marrying the younger woman (now my step-daughter). Hence my murderous intentions towards him which express themselves in nightly death scenes (drop in body temperature, gasping for breath) ... I must admit it did me good to talk for once to this dearly loved father about my hate feelings.

(Ferenczi and Groddeck, 2002, p. 19)

In August, Ferenczi spent his holidays in Seefeld (Tyrol) with the Ranks. In September, the 7th International Congress took place in Berlin (Germany): Freud developed certain key themes of the book that he would publish the following year, *The Ego and the Id* (1923b);

Ferenczi presented *Thalassa*; Melanie Klein presented 'Early analysis'; and Karl Abraham presented an essay on manic-depressive psychosis. At this Congress, Freud proposed the creation of an essay prize for a paper on the 'relations of psychoanalytic technique with psychoanalytic theory' in order to evaluate how far technique influences theory and to what extent they furthered or hindered each other at the present time.

It was in 1923 that Freud discovered that he had cancer of the jaw. It was also the year of Ferenczi's fiftieth birthday, which Freud marked by writing a tribute: 'Dr. Sándor Ferenczi (on his 50th birthday)'.

In July, during their holidays spent together in Klobenstein in the Tyrol, Ferenczi and Rank finished writing their book, *The Development of Psychoanalysis*, which was published in 1925 (1925b). The announcement of the publication of this book created a storm within the Committee for two reasons. The first was linked to the fact that it was understood that the members of the Committee would only publish their writings with the assent of the Committee as a whole. This was not the case, for the book 'appeared suddenly without anyone else in the Committee except Freud, knowing about it' (Jones, 1957, p. 58). The second reason lay in the fact that the theses advanced by the authors gave certain members of the Committee – particularly Abraham and, to a lesser extent, Jones – the feeling that there was a risk of deviation.

Also in 1924, Rank (1924) published *The Trauma of Birth*. On 2 January, at the evening meeting of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, Ferenczi presented the book he had co-authored with Rank. Following that evening, Freud wrote to Ferenczi, saying: 'I do not entirely agree with all that the book contains' (Jones, 1957, p. 59). In a very long letter dated 22 January 1924, Ferenczi said that he felt 'shattered' by this remark, to which Freud replied on 4 February: 'As regards your effort to remain in harmony with me throughout, I value it highly as an expression of your friendship, but I find the goal neither necessary nor easily attainable ... So, why shouldn't you have the right to try and see whether something doesn't go differently than I intended' (Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, p. 123). On 15 February, Freud, seeking to calm things down, sent a conciliatory circular letter to the members of the Committee with the aim of easing tensions.

In spite of the dissensions within the Committee, the 8th International Congress, which was held on 21–23 April in Salzburg (Austria), went ahead without any embarrassing incidents. Abraham was proposed for the presidency by Ferenczi.

During this year, Freud approved of the idea, which never in fact came to fruition, that Ferenczi would come and settle in Vienna. As Jones writes: 'He would have become the director of the polyclinic and probably of the new Institute too; instead of Rank, he would have replaced Freud as President of the Vienna Society' (1957, p. 59).

In 1924, *Thalassa: A Theory of Genitality* (Ferenczi, 1924a) was published, the 'gestation' of which had lasted nine years (1915–1924).

The 9th International Congress was held in Bad-Hombourg (Germany) on 2–5 September. Delegated by her ill father, Anna Freud read a paper entitled 'Some psychological consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes' (Freud, 1925j). At this Congress, serious divergences emerged between European psychoanalysts and American psychoanalysts concerning analyses conducted by analysts without medical training (lay analysis).

In October, the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse* published an extremely laudatory review of *Thalassa*, written by Alexander, a review that Freud said that he had taken 'particular pleasure' in reading.

At the end of the year, Abraham died from a lung abscess.

In February 1926, Ferenczi proposed taking Freud, who was suffering from tachycardia, into analysis. Touched by this offer, Freud thanked him and added to his letter of 27 February: 'There may indeed be a psychic root, but let's not forget, dying also has its psychic root, and it remains quite doubtful whether it can be mastered through analysis, and finally, whether at seventy years of age one doesn't have a good right to rest of any kind' (Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, p. 252).

In May, Eitingon, Ferenczi, Jones and Sachs gathered together with Freud for his seventieth birthday celebrations. In August, Ferenczi spent a week with Freud in Semmering.

In September, Ferenczi left for the United States for eight months. On 9 December, he gave a lecture, 'Gulliver fantasies' (Ferenczi, 1926), before the annual Assembly of the New York Society of Clinical Psychiatry. On 26 December, he made a speech at the winter meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association. In the same year, he also published his 'Contraindications of the "active" psychoanalytic technique' (1926).

In January 1927, Ferenczi entered into conflict with the analysts of New York, for he wanted American 'non-medical' analysts to be recognised as an independent society by the International Association. The conflict was exacerbated because he gave the impression of favouring the training of 'non-medical' analysts to the detriment of 'medically

trained' analysts: he devoted 25 evenings of seminars to the first and 20 to the second.

Ferenczi departed from the United States on 2 June, leaving behind him a frosty atmosphere. On returning to Europe, he stopped off in London, where he visited Jones. On 13 June 1927, at the joint session of the sections of medicine and pedagogy of the British Psychological Society, he presented his paper 'The adaptation of the family to the child' (1927a). During the summer, he stayed with Groddeck in Baden-Baden, then in Berlin, where he met Eitingon.

In September, the 10th International Congress was held in Innsbruck (Austria), during which the disagreement over 'medical' and 'non-medical' analysts was growing bigger. Ferenczi presented his paper, 'The problem of the termination of the analysis' (1927b). After the Congress, the members of the Committee decided to modify the structure of the Committee: Eitingon became president, Jones and Ferenczi vice-presidents, and Anna Freud secretary.

On his way back to Budapest, Ferenczi visited Freud, who felt ruffled by the fact that, after returning from America, Ferenczi had waited so long before coming to see him. Furthermore, Ferenczi gave him the impression of presenting a clearly reserved attitude, which led Jones to say that 'it was the first indication of his gradual withdrawal from Freud' (Jones, 1957, p. 143). Nevertheless, once he was back in Budapest, Ferenczi wrote to him on 2 October 1927, 'neither the time nor the many storms that are howling around us can ever change anything in the solidity of our personal and scientific bond' (Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, p. 325), to which Freud replied on 25 October: 'Since 1909 we have covered a nice piece of trail with each other, always hand in hand, and it won't be any different for the short stretch that still remains to be trod' (2000, p. 327).

In February 1928, Ferenczi organised a series of lectures within the framework of the Hungarian Psychoanalytical Society and read his paper, 'The elasticity of psychoanalytic technique' (1928a). In April, he visited Freud in Vienna and, on 30 April, presented 'Psychoanalysis and criminology' (1919a) to the Association of Applied Psychology.

In July, Ferenczi visited Freud in Semmering and in September he was at his bedside in Berlin, for Freud was hospitalised in the Tegel Clinic in order to have a new prosthesis for his jaw fitted by Dr Schroeder.

In October, Ferenczi travelled in Spain to Madrid and Toledo. In Madrid he gave a lecture entitled 'Über de Lehrgang des

Psychoanalytikers' ['On the training process of psychoanalysts'] (1928c). In January 1929, the group of 'non-medical' psychoanalysts formed by Ferenczi in New York disbanded voluntarily.

In June, Ferenczi visited Freud; following this visit, Freud wrote to Ferenczi: 'you have doubtless outwardly distanced yourself from me in the last few years. Inwardly, I hope, not so far that a step toward the creation of a new oppositional analysis might be expected from you my Paladin and secret Grand Vizier' (letter dated 13 December 1929 in Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, pp. 373–374).

In August, at the 11th International Congress of Psychoanalysis held in Oxford (England), Ferenczi read his paper 'The principle of relaxation and neocatharsis' (1930a), in which he wrote: 'In 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 analyse"' (Ferenczi, 1955, p. 122).

In a letter to Freud dated 25 December, Ferenczi wrote: 'My actual disposition is, after all, that of an investigator, and, freed of all personal ambitions, I immersed myself with redoubled curiosity in the study of my cases ... The newly acquired (although they do essentially sooner hark back to old things) experiences naturally also have an effect on details of technique. Certain all too harsh measures must be relaxed, without completely losing sight of the didactic secondary intention' (Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, pp. 375–376).

Ferenczi published *Thalassa* in a Hungarian edition, modifying the title to *Catastrophes in the Development of the Genital Function: A Psychoanalytic Study* (Ferenczi, 1929a).

After a meeting at the beginning of 1930, Ferenczi wrote to Freud in a letter dated 17 January:

Now, in the relationship between you and me, it is (at least in me) a matter of the most diverse conflicts of feeling and attitude. First you were my revered teacher and unattainable model, for whom I harbored the, as you well know, not completely unalloyed feelings of an apprentice. Then you became my analyst, but the unfavorable conditions did not permit carrying out my analysis to completion. I was especially sorry that you did not comprehend and bring to abreaction in the analysis the only partly transferred negative feelings and fantasies. As is well known, no analyst can do that without help, [not] even I, with my years of experience with others. For that, a very laborious self-analysis was necessary, which I carried

out quite methodically afterwards. Naturally, this was also connected to the fact that I exchanged my somewhat boyish attitude for the insight that I should not rely so completely on your goodwill, i.e., that I should not overestimate my significance for you.

(Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, pp. 382–383)

In his reply on 20 January 1930, Freud said that he had been ‘amused by some passages’, particularly when Ferenczi reproached him for having neglected the negative transference. In making his reproaches, Freud writes, Ferenczi was acting as if he had forgotten that at the time, no one knew for certain that the negative transferences and reactions were in all cases foreseeable, or at least he wasn’t. Moreover, he added, owing to their excellent relationship, it would have required an enormous amount of time for the negative transference to manifest itself.<sup>2</sup>

In August, Ferenczi began writing his ‘Notes and fragments’ on a regular basis. In this same year, he travelled once again in Spain and gave a lecture in Madrid: ‘The psychoanalytic therapy of character’ (1928b). Freud was considering proposing Ferenczi for the presidency of the International Association at the next Congress. Ferenczi also published ‘The principle of relaxation and neocatharsis’ (1930a).

Freud’s seventy-fifth birthday came around in May 1931, but he was unable to celebrate it as he was suffering from complications linked to the spreading of his jaw cancer. Ferenczi, who was passing through Vienna, was able to see Freud for a few minutes.

Despite Freud’s encouragement, Ferenczi hesitated to accept the presidency of the International Association.

After an interruption in their correspondence during the summer, Ferenczi wrote to Freud on 15 September to present his new paths of research: ‘I try to move forward in other, often precisely opposite ways, and I still have the hope of finding the right path at one time or another’ (Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, p. 417). Freud replied in a letter dated 18 September:

There is no doubt that with this interruption of contact you are distancing yourself from me more and more. I say, and hope not, alienating. I accept it as fate – like so many other things ... It is with regret that I term it an expression of inner dissatisfaction that you are trying to press forward in all kinds of directions which to me seem to lead to no desirable end. But I have – you yourself bear

witness to this – always respected your independence and am prepared to wait until you yourself take steps to turn around.

(Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, p 418)

In October, Ferenczi spent his holidays in Capri. On his return, he stopped off in Vienna on 27 and 28 October. He and Freud discussed their differences openly. A few weeks later, Ferenczi wrote to Freud to say that it had not changed any of his opinions (Jones, 1957, p. 174).

On 13 December, Freud wrote his famous letter of admonition to Ferenczi concerning the ‘technique of the kiss’:

Now, picture to yourself, what the consequence will be of making your technique public. There is no revolutionary who is not knocked out of the field by a still more radical one. Many independent thinkers in technique will say to themselves: Why stop with a kiss? ... soon we will have accepted into the technique of psychoanalysis the whole repertoire of demiviergerie and petting parties, with the result being a great increase in interest in analysis on the part of analysts and those who are being analyzed. The new ally will, however, easily lay too much claim to this interest for himself, the younger of our colleagues will be hard put, in the relational connections that they have made, to stop at the point where they had originally intended, and Godfather Ferenczi, looking at the busy scenery that he has created, will possibly say to himself: perhaps I should have stopped in my technique of maternal tenderness *before* the kiss

(Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, p. 422)

Ferenczi now published ‘Child analysis in the analysis of adults’ (1931). On 7 January 1932, he began writing his *Clinical Diary*. The ‘Notes’ were broken off on 2 October 1932.

In August, Ferenczi wrote to Freud to say that he was renouncing the presidency of the International Association. On his way to the 12th International Congress, which was due to begin in Wiesbaden (Germany) on 3 September, he stopped off in Vienna to give Freud his paper, ‘Confusion of tongues between adults and the child: the language of tenderness and passion’ (1933a), to read. Owing to the lack of mutual comprehension that now existed between the two men, their encounter was painful. Freud, deeply shocked by the contents of the paper that Ferenczi had given him, asked him to refrain from publishing anything until he had reconsidered the position he was expressing in it.



At the Congress, Ferenczi read his paper without it raising problems or arousing opposition. After the Congress, he stayed in France in Biarritz, and then in Luchon; he had a relapse of Biermer's anemia, a condition that had recently been deteriorating, and had to cut his holidays short.

In September, Freud wrote to Marie Bonaparte: 'Ferenczi is a bitter drop in the cup. His wise wife has told me I should think of him as a sick child' (Jones, 1957, p. 174). On 2 October, Freud wrote to Ferenczi:

I don't any longer believe that you will rectify yourself, the way I rectified myself a generation earlier. For three years you have been systematically turning away from me ... Objectively, I think I should be in a position to point out to you the theoretical error in your construction, but to what end? I am convinced you would not be susceptible to any doubts.

(Freud and Ferenczi, 2000, p. 445)

At the beginning of 1933, Ferenczi's condition worsened and a neuroanaemic syndrome set in as a result of the evolution of his Biermer's anaemia.

On 22 May, Ferenczi died suddenly from the consequences of respiratory difficulties secondary to myelitis. As a tribute, Freud wrote: 'Obituary: Sándor Ferenczi' (1933c). The article 'The confusion of tongues', which was due to be published in the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, was withdrawn. *The Clinical Diary of Sándor Ferenczi* (1932) was published in 1969, 37 years after his death.

## Notes

- 1 Even if Freud and Ferenczi both recognised that Ferenczi's analysis was a beneficial experience, we know that the latter never had the feeling that he had derived all the benefits from it that he had hoped for.
- 2 It is worth pointing out here that in this letter of 1930, Freud makes use of exactly the same arguments concerning the absence of *negative transference* in Ferenczi as those that he employed several years later when he referred to his analytic relationship with Ferenczi in 'Analysis terminable and interminable' (1937c).