

Ricerche

Training Analysis: A Historical View

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Riassunto *L'analisi didattica: una prospettiva storica* - Il carattere obbligatorio dell'analisi didattica, ossia l'analisi personale cui ogni candidato a diventare psicoanalista deve sottoporsi, era una pratica vigente presso tutte le istituzioni psicoanalitiche già al tempo di Freud. E tuttavia, quel che all'inizio si era configurato come un'aggiunta non particolarmente gravosa all'addestramento analitico, si è poi trasformato in qualcosa di molto diverso. Le scuole psicoanalitiche hanno mostrato scarso impegno nello stabilire l'efficacia dell'analisi personale, mediante la promozione di studi empirici o semplicemente tramite un più dettagliato esame della sua legittimità teorica (questione che esula dalla necessità della sua completezza, costantemente rimarcata), nonostante si tratti di una pratica che richiede centinaia di ore di analisi e un ingente esborso di danaro per il candidato analista. La grande resistenza verso la messa in questione di questa pratica va di pari passo con la persistente circolazione di una serie di leggende sulle sue origini. Una dettagliata disamina storica offrirà del materiale interessante per proporre alcune considerazioni che mostrano come il costume di chiedere l'analisi didattica sia sostenuta da motivazioni di natura istituzionale piuttosto che da necessità teoriche o da evidenze empiriche.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Analisi didattica; Storia della psicoanalisi; Sigmund Freud; Carl Gustav Jung; Sandor Ferenczi.

Abstract The obligatory nature of training analysis, i.e. the personal analysis of every candidate analyst, was adopted by all psychoanalytic institutes during Freud's lifetime. But what had initially been a not particularly burdensome addition to training was subsequently transformed into something quite different. Psychoanalytic schools have shown little concern to establish the efficacy of personal analysis either by undertaking empirical studies or simply examining its theoretical justifications more closely (apart from the constantly reasserted need for completeness), despite the fact it requires hundreds of hours of analysis at vast expense to the candidate. The considerable resistance to questioning this practice goes hand in hand with the persistent circulation of a series of legends about its origin. An accurate historical review will offer interesting material for consideration, showing how the custom of requiring training analysis is underpinned by reasons of an institutional nature rather than by theoretical necessity or empirical findings.

KEYWORDS: Training Analysis; History of Psychoanalysis; Sigmund Freud; Carl Gustav Jung; Sandor Ferenczi.

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Freud and Jung

THE VARIOUS CURRENTS OF PSYCHOANALYTIC THOUGHT have never disguised or attempted to underestimate their respective theoretical and therapeutic differences of approach, often to the point of making it seem quite hopeless to attempt to find so much as a patch of hypothetical common ground.¹ One of the few points of contact between the schools of psychoanalytic training is the absolute requirement that the candidate analysts undergo at least one training analysis. The theoretical basis for this practice, which was introduced in the first decade of the 20th century, was not propounded by the founding father, Sigmund Freud, but by Carl Gustav Jung, at a time when he was still Freud's heir apparent. The historic evidence of Jung's being the originator is a statement by Freud himself, to be found in *Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psycho-analysis*:

I count it as one of the many merits of the Zurich school of analysis that they have laid increased emphasis on [the fact that] everyone who wishes to carry out analyses on other people shall first himself undergo an analysis by someone with expert knowledge. Anyone who takes up the work seriously should choose this course, which offers more than one advantage; the sacrifice involved in laying oneself open to another person without being driven to it by illness is amply rewarded.²

There is no passage in the works of Jung in which he seems to *introduce* the idea of the necessity for a training analysis, but in the published text (from 1912) of his American lectures, which he gave in 1910, he does mention the need for an analyst to be analyzed. This mention, however, seems paradoxically to refer to something already established. Jung's claims to have chronological precedence in this regard are found in later texts,³ which seems logical, given the recognition he had had from Freud. In any case, there would

appear to be no cause to doubt that it was to Jung that Freud alluded in the text quoted above, nor does there seem to be any identifiable reason whatever to question the historic accuracy of that assertion.⁴

When relations with Jung deteriorated, Freud created a sort of *screen memory* in aid of the psychoanalytic movement, attributing to Hermann Nunberg the paternity of the idea of training analysis, supposedly first aired at the International Congress of Psychoanalysis in Budapest. This version of events is often cited in psychoanalytic circles as quite reliable.⁵ Even Peter Gay, in his celebrated biography of Freud, confidently states that the necessity of a training analysis emerged only in the years subsequent to the First World War.⁶ But let us return to Freud's original attribution. It is well known how ungenerous Freud could be in recognizing the merits of others, even to the extent of occasionally claiming to be the originator of ideas that were not really his, and this despite his in fact extraordinary creativity.⁷ It could be that such a clear attribution to others of something that is still considered a cornerstone of psychoanalytic training reveals a certain ambivalence about this practice on Freud's part. We have, after all, seen that when he retracted his original identification of this specific merit of the Zurich School, Freud did not attribute the idea to himself, but drafted Nunberg for the purpose. And when it came to the formal requirement, Freud deputed someone else (although indeed a faithful disciple, Max Eitingon) to draw up the practical regulations.

There was, however, one occasion when Freud seemed tempted to appropriate the authorship of the idea of a required training analysis, but, in the case in point, it was a question of a training analysis for each of his closest associates, to be carried out by him. Evidence can be found in his correspondence with Ernest Jones during a delicate moment in the history of the psychoanalytic movement, just when Jung had definitively broken away from Freud. Jones was very much in favor of forming a select group of associates who would be analyzed

in depth by Freud, and recalled that this idea had first been launched by Ferenczi.⁸ Freud replied positively, adding the unambiguous words «You say it was Ferenczi who expressed this idea, yet *it may be mine own*».⁹

When Freud finally returned to the subject of the function of training analysis in *Analysis terminable and interminable*, one of his very last essays, he showed much less conviction than in the work from 1912. After stating that «It cannot be disputed that analysts in their own personalities have not invariably come up to the standard of psychical normality to which they wish to educate their patients»¹⁰ and while upholding the need for training analysis, he went so far as to maintain Freud in 1937: «For practical reasons this analysis can only be short and incomplete. Its main object is to enable his teacher to make a judgement as to whether the candidate can be accepted for further training».¹¹

If, however, – politically inspired retractions apart – it was actually Jung who first had the idea of analyzing the analyst, one can legitimately wonder in what circumstances he shared it with Freud. We can assume, since there is no written evidence even in their correspondence (which was preserved and published almost in its entirety), that the communication must have taken place informally. In all probability, Jung realized that insufficient familiarity with his or her own unconscious could lead an analyst into excessive involvement in the analytic relationship, opening the door to a relationship of a very different nature. This conjecture is justified by the papers of Sabina Spielrein, one of Jung's first patients. Although there is no proof of any physical relationship between them, there was, at a certain point, at the very least a definite danger of such a relationship.¹² Thus it would be altogether comprehensible for Jung not to seem eager, at any rate initially, to present his idea, original though it might be, as a great breakthrough.

Yet again, however, we find Freud and Jung taking diametrically opposed positions: the former would seem to have concluded that

it was largely in terms of policy that it was opportune to require a training analysis. From what we know of the way Freud dealt with other cases of ethically questionable relationships, moreover, we can conclude that Freud was not so much shocked by the possibility that followers of his might have had sexual relations with patients, as he was worried about the possibly resultant tarnishing of the image of the psychoanalytic movement.¹³ Jung would seem to have been prompted by an attempt to prevent – at least for others – the repetition of an experience which – quite apart from the extent to which it may have distracted him from the necessary analytic neutrality – was certainly destabilizing.

The history of the use of training analysis in psychoanalytic institutes is in fact marked by the conflict between educational motives and reasons of State: between freedom and control. In a sense it is also a replay of the human and professional relationship between Freud and Jung. It should, meanwhile, be mentioned that neither of the two actually ever managed to have a real training analysis himself. The attempt they made to analyze each other soon ran aground.¹⁴

In any case, there is no direct evidence regarding the time or mode of Jung's communication to Freud about his idea of making training analysis compulsory. A series of historical indications does, however, seem to limit the likely time to the period between 1910 and 1912. The *terminus ante quem* of March 1912 is, of course, dictated by the date of publication of Freud's above-cited work in which that requirement is mentioned for the first time. The first conceivable *terminus post quem* would have to be in 1907, the year of the first meeting between Jung and Freud (since we have concluded that the vehicle was an informal discussion rather than a letter). Also, 1907, according to Ernest Jones, was the year of the start of the first experiment in training analysis. In his biography of Freud, in fact, Jones writes that the first training analysis took place, in an absolutely informal manner, between 1907 and 1909, with Max Eitingon as

the analysand. Having consulted Freud for help with a difficult case, Eitingon found he was being analyzed himself in the course of occasional strolls around Vienna with the great man.¹⁵ Since it was Eitingon who subsequently drew up the first official regulations about training analysis in particular, and the preparation of analysts in general, we can be astonished at the curious fate that led the first analyst who was analyzed by Freud to present the rules; or else we can suppose that the first training analysis is a legend created after the fact, a rather widespread practice within the psychoanalytic movement.¹⁶ It may be reasonable to conclude that the reconstruction is legendary in part: that there was no intention at the time to “teach” Eitingon by means of this curious form of analysis, but that his rambles with Freud, when reinterpreted later, could have taken on a historic significance that neither of the two men would ever have foreseen. It is, on the other hand, most unlikely that there is any connection between these rambles and Jung’s idea. Apart from anything else, two letters from Freud to Ferenczi would appear to limit Eitingon’s experience with Freud to a few weeks in 1909: the first letter mentions the recently introduced walks with Eitingon as something new¹⁷ and the second mentions Eitingon’s imminent departure, which would mark the end of this pleasant pastime.¹⁸ In any case, we know that before 1912 Freud had, in an equally informal way, analyzed other people in his circle (such as Emma Ekstein, Felix Gattel, Wilhelm Stekel), but without considering these analyses part of a training program, indeed even feeling uneasy about having performed them.¹⁹ And already in 1908, Ferenczi wrote to Freud that he had proposed analysis to two neurologists as a means of converting them to the psychoanalytic cause, but not, indeed, as a method of training.²⁰

Jung, in his turn, practiced an informal sort of psychoanalysis on people he thought might become adherents: a letter from 1909²¹ provides evidence of Jung’s having analyzed a Dr. Seif of Munich for three days for that purpose. It has instead been suggested that the first

analysis considered by the analytic couple in question to be a training analysis was the one undergone by Ferenczi with Jung.²²

Paradoxically, in the Freud-Ferenczi correspondence (which, from 1908 on, was vast and constant), Ferenczi appears to make no explicit mention of this experience. Only indirectly can one infer Ferenczi’s precocious conviction of the importance of analysis for the analyst, e.g. when one considers the amazement he expresses at Sachs’s profound understanding, despite his not having been analyzed by anyone.²³

Also in 1910, however, Freud suggested the need for self-analysis – not for training analysis – in two writings which could be described as political in nature, in which the question takes on a particular importance. This means that he had not yet had Jung’s suggestion that training analysis was necessary, or he was at least not yet entirely convinced by it (and hence any such suggestion would have been quite recent). In *The future prospects of psychoanalytic therapy*,²⁴ Freud stresses the need to continue with self-analysis during one’s practice as a therapist, because the patient cannot carry on with his process of self-knowledge beyond the level the analyst himself has reached, and also because the analyst must keep his *counter-transference* under control (it was in this work, it should be mentioned, that this term first appeared publicly). In the second text, “*Wild*” *psychoanalysis*,²⁵ Freud states that the right to call oneself a psychoanalyst should be reserved for those who have learned the method within his circle, and who have progressed with their own self-analysis.

On the basis of the publication date of another writing by Jung, however, one might consider a further adjustment in the *terminus post quem*, which would now be 1911. Jung, in fact, writes, in a critical review of an essay by Morton Prince, that «*practical and theoretical understanding of psychoanalysis is a function of analytical self-knowledge*».²⁶ This passage, however vague in its wording, would seem to refer not to training analysis, but rather to self-analysis, which was originally meant to be

part of the preparation of every analyst, according to Freud. On this basis – which, it must be admitted, is highly conjectural – the origin of training analysis would have to be assigned to 1911-1912 (or perhaps just to 1911, given that the texts Jung and Freud published the following year seem to imply the passage of just that little bit of time – with the attendant detachment – which is necessary for metabolizing what was already considered an acquired idea).

■ Regulation and institutionalization of training analysis

Eitingon's proposal about the regulation of training analysis was issued, as we have seen, much later. He outlined it publicly in 1925 at the congress in Bad Homburg, in the context of a tripartite training model which would become the prototype of the rules adopted by the various institutes that were being set up within the International Psychoanalytic Association, the international body founded by Freud together with a committee of his most loyal associates. The model included, in addition to the analysis of the candidate analyst, attendance at required theoretical instruction seminars and also a period of clinical practice under the supervision of an experienced analyst, called in fact a teaching analyst. The educational structure thus organized was adopted at first only by the Berlin Institute; if we are to believe what Eitingon himself declares, however, in 1927 aspiring analysts in Vienna and London as well were already undergoing an apprenticeship of this sort.²⁷ The Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute had, however, achieved a kind of worldwide leadership in the training of analysts, at least until the advent of Nazism, when aspiring German psychotherapists – and only the non-Jews – were induced to apply to the more “Aryan” Göring Institute. According to Peter Gay's reconstruction, nevertheless, the Berlin Institute, in its heyday, absolutely did not take on those bureaucratic qualities which later came to characterize psychoanalytic institutes: it would seem that the

ever more numerous candidates – including many foreigners – were fascinated not only by the general atmosphere of enthusiasm and commitment they found there, but also by the informal structure.²⁸

A not inconsiderable number of analysts, in truth, regarded even a minimal level of formality about the training analysis requirement with skepticism. Amongst them we can certainly include Hanns Sachs, who in addition to being one of Freud's closest associates, was also one of the very first full-time training analysts, first in Berlin and then in the United States. Sachs's statement already sounds rather disillusioned:

Religions have always demanded a trial period, a novitiate, of those among their devotees who desired to give their entire life into the service of the supermundane and the supernatural, those, in other words, who were to become monks or priests... It can be seen that analysis needs something corresponding to the novitiate of the Church.²⁹

Thus Sachs compares training analysis to a sort of initiation, a way of taking one's place in a circle of psychoanalysts. His attitude, it would seem, remained rather detached, both during his training practice in Berlin, where he was sent specifically for that purpose by Freud, and in Chicago, to which he was invited to move and where, despite being received with full honors, he had some trouble fitting into a system which was rapidly becoming quite bureaucratic.

Sandor Ferenczi appeared to take a very different position when, in 1927, he called for the establishment of a more thorough training analysis than what was evidently being proposed by a part of the psychoanalytic world:

To stand firm against this general assault by the patient the analyst requires to have been fully and completely analysed himself. I mention this because it is often held to be sufficient if a candidate spends, say, a year gaining acquaintance with the principal mechanisms in his so-called training analy-

sis. His further development is left to what he learns in the course of his own experience. [...] The analysis himself, on whom the fate of so many other people depends, must know and be in control of even the most recondite weakness of his own character; and this is impossible without a fully competed analysis.³⁰

The psychoanalytic mainstream has, in general, never been particularly generous in its evaluation of Ferenczi's undeniable merits.³¹ In this case, however, it has been willing to recognize his contribution, as is confirmed by Laplanche and Pontalis' *Vocabulaire* (1973) – or even to assign him a quasi-heroic role.³²

It can be seen that the psychoanalytic movement has no trouble disowning Freud when it comes to complicating the initiation of candidates. Another case in which Freud's word was not gospel was when they introduced the rule in the United States that practitioners of psychoanalysis had to be medical doctors. Freud had opposed that position but was obliged to accept it by Brill's unequivocal threat that American psychoanalysts would desert the IPA in a body unless he gave it his approval.³³

Etchegoyen, meanwhile, with explicit reference to Ferenczi's 1927 essay, seems to contrast it with *Analysis terminable and interminable*, which was, however, not written until ten years later and could hence not be the target of this supposed attack. Yet Etchegoyen himself – together with everyone else who views Ferenczi as a supporter of a training analysis of indeterminate length – fails to consider a lecture given in Madrid the following year, which indirectly sheds light on quite different intentions. In 1928, Ferenczi spoke of the training of an analyst to an audience of potential candidates, defending the need to carry out a course of regular training in one of the places where there already existed a regular training institute. Specifically, he said:

The sacrifices, which analytic training urges to a candidate, are considerable. After the diploma, he [or she] has to live for two

or even three years in one of the above mentioned cities [London, Berlin, Vienna], and during the first half of this period, commit himself [or herself] to a personal analysis one hour a day.³⁴

Thus, given the longest period of residence Ferenczi envisaged, that is three years, we can conclude that if he considered one year to be too brief for a training analysis, his notion of “long enough” does not in any case exceed a year and a half. And this would seem to make sense in a historic context in which a standard analysis might last between six and twelve months, so a training analysis that went on for 18 months could be twice or even thrice as long. Compared with the year that might be, as he suggested in the 1927 essay, insufficient, the proposed 50% increase to achieve an acceptable length does not, in any case, seem inconsiderable. One should also note that, some 15 years earlier, Ferenczi had regarded with disdain the fact that anyone could accuse him of conducting an analysis lasting two to three years.³⁵

After Freud's death the position *attributed* to Ferenczi came gradually to be accepted by the notables of the International Psychoanalytic Association, as we can see from the following statement by one of the leading lights of Ego psychology in the United States:

I believe that the didactic analysis [sic] should not be less thorough or “complete” than the therapeutic analysis, but definitely more so. It should give the analysand an insight into the dynamics of his behavior and personal conflicts and, insofar as possible, into their origin. It should enable him to use this insight under the changing circumstances of life in the continuous process of adjustment, which includes his reaction to the pathological material to which he will be exposed.³⁶

Kris's position, which he subsequently confirmed,³⁷ was echoed on the other side of the Atlantic by Michael Balint, a proponent of object relations theory who warned of the risk

that an insufficiently thorough training analysis might oblige a psychoanalyst to repeat the process subsequently but with greater engagement; Balint also found it absurd that a candidate could be considered «healthy (i.e. trained) enough for starting to analyse patients on his own..., but as yet not necessarily healthy enough to deal with his own neurotic unconscious problems».³⁸ Ideas like those of Balint and Kris gained ground in psychoanalytic institutes, making the training process ever longer and more burdensome for the candidate analyst, who was thus implicitly equated with extreme neurotics. More than one teaching analyst, during this same period, expressed perplexity at having to accept as candidate analysts people whom they considered too “normal”,³⁹ and at times there seemed to be a possibility that a candidate’s apparent normality actually concealed a defensive attitude which in its turn masked a deeply hidden neurosis.⁴⁰

If, however, there had come to be a consensus about the need for a thorough analytic process and about the establishment of selection criteria, recording the nature of these criteria was left, essentially, to the oral tradition of the institutes. A documented review from the ‘60s reveals the general *absence* in the literature of attempts to describe either the profile of a good candidate or the level of thoroughness required of a training analysis.⁴¹

The fact that an observation of this kind should have been made nearly 40 years after Eitingon’s regulations came into force would appear to be an essential confirmation of the sectarian tendencies of psychoanalytic institutes. Nor does David Kayris’s observation seem to have lost its validity 40 years later, given that Marylou Lyonnel’s⁴² has discovered that “remarkably little” has been written on the subject and David Tuckett⁴³ has found that it is still necessary to make the case for greater transparency about it.

■ Criticism and controversy

In actual fact, for a long time there had al-

so been some in the psychoanalytic world who expressed their awareness of the risk that the schools would ultimately be stultified by extreme formalism and that training analysis would at last be no more than a long rite of passage. An alarm was clearly sounded, not much after Kris’s and Balint’s contributions, by Edward Glover’s severe criticism:

It is scarcely to be expected that a student who has spent some years under the artificial and sometimes hothouse conditions of a training analysis and whose professional career depends on overcoming “resistance” to the satisfaction of his training analyst, can be in a favourable position to defend his scientific integrity against his analyst’s theories and practice. And the longer he remains in training analysis, the less likely he is to do so. For according to his analyst the candidate’s objections to interpretations rate as “resistances”. In short there is a tendency inherent in the training situation to perpetuate error.⁴⁴

Actually, Anna Freud had already expressed serious doubts about the purpose of training analysis in an essay from 1938. Paradoxically, however, this essay, which was written in German, had quite limited circulation until its publication in English 30 years later – in a considerably milder version: it seems obvious that this all came about for IPA political reasons.

So Glover’s comments must have seemed at the time like a first warning signal. Not long after his contribution was published, in fact, there was an attempt to explore a series of contradictions characteristic of training analysis. Indeed it had not escaped the notice of theoreticians that one of the basic elements of analytic transference – the neutrality of the therapist – is violated in the course of training analysis, in which context it is not appropriate to consider the patient paranoid because he feels he is being judged by the therapist: the blank screen is greatly contaminated by elements of reality;⁴⁵ dependence on the analyst

is not the result of regression but reflects the professional relationship between teacher and candidate.⁴⁶

Despite the doubts that are periodically expressed about the legitimacy of an analysis carried out by a person who is in some way called upon, whether directly or indirectly, to judge the candidate, the methods that have been proposed from time to time to obviate the problems have often been singularly insubstantial. Someone has proposed that there be an in-depth analysis of resistance typical of training analysis;⁴⁷ someone else has suggested quite simply that the interpretations be subtler:⁴⁸ we could go on at some length, but most of the proposals seem to reflect – in the best of cases – a conviction that the system, however imperfect, is the only one possible.⁴⁹ The fact that a large number of candidates chose to resort to a second analysis “for themselves” after finishing the one “for the Institute”⁵⁰ does not seem to have shaken the serene conviction of the teaching analysts. Nor does anyone appear to have paid particular attention to the historical errors that have been committed: one need but think of the case of Margaret Mahler, who was failed as an analyst by Helene Deutsch, her teaching analyst.⁵¹

Thus it came in the end to speaking of training analysis as a “nihilation process” of the candidate.⁵² Only quite recently there have again been some authoritative figures who have openly stated what has really been clear to everyone for some time, i.e. that the prevalent training system is no more than a power system, by means of which the experienced teaching analysts achieve three basic results: first of all, they reap considerable financial benefits, particularly since training analyses are among the limited number left for which the “patients” are still willing to respect the classic setting of four to five sessions a week; secondly, they can select a generation of heirs who have been formed to respect orthodoxy; and lastly, they can have the narcissistic satisfaction of seeing themselves idealized by their own students through the operation of a transference than can never be truly re-

solved.⁵³ The price one pays is the muzzling of the creative impulse, as Kernberg charges, making use of his devastating sense of humor, in *Thirty Methods to Destroy the Creativity of Psychoanalytic Candidates*.⁵⁴

Recent developments and conclusion

Kayris’ original proposal⁵⁵ – subsequently reintroduced by McLaughlin⁵⁶ – based on having training analysis carried out by a therapist unconnected with the candidate’s training institute, fell for a long time essentially on deaf ears. For all that a certain number of training Institutes no longer require a direct report from the teaching analyst on the “progress” of the candidate, the influence of the former on the career of the latter cannot help being decisive, as long as the analyst is an influential member of the same Institute (and often this influence is confirmed by the right to veto the progress of the candidate’s career). Of the training institutes associated with the IPA, only those in France and Uruguay have established – and only fairly recently – that training analysis, although required, may be carried out by any analyst and, in any case, without any control or evaluation from the institute.⁵⁷

A recent attempt to summarize what has appeared in the literature about the purposes of training analysis⁵⁸ lists five fundamental points advanced by its supporters: training analysis, they maintain, serves to (a) make the candidate a better analyst; (b) instruct him in the psychoanalytic technique; (c) support his technical learning from a different point of view (e.g. through understanding the interplay of transference and counter-transference); (d) provide him with an experience of analysis that will strengthen his capacity for introspection and empathy; e) reinforce his conviction of the efficacy of psychoanalysis. It should be remembered that some of these points make effective sense *from a historical point of view*. Before Freud’s *Recommendations* (1912), in fact, there was no text that described psychoanalytic technique and, to tell the truth, the

psychoanalytic movement was for a long time rather stingy with actual technical writings. So it remained the case for quite a while that to have an idea of how analysis worked, experiencing it yourself might be the most practical answer. Having said this, we must point out that, in the light of the current situation (but we could also say “of the last 60 years”), points (b), (c) and (d) should apply not so much to training analysis as to supervision, in conjunction with the study of the copious technical literature. Point (e) is in itself tenuous, since in a scientific community, proofs of efficacy should be based on empirical studies (or in the case in point at least on clinical studies) and not on personal experience, which normally serves as proof in partisan circles. Point (a) actually begs the question: it offers as proof what should instead be demonstrated. But even supposing that the points listed above provide sufficient evidence in favor of training analysis as such, not one of them even approaches the question of the intensity (how many hours per week) or the length (how many total hours). The reasoning frequently seems to be: given that we know (?) that training analysis is useful, and the current system demands it, the current system should be left as it is – a clearly sophistical argument. The need for a general reform of training analysis, with regard to its length and frequency and to making it inaccessible to evaluation that might affect the career prospects of the candidates involved, is, nevertheless, now increasingly recognized.⁵⁹

In response to the long-standing concerns on the scientific status of the psychoanalysis,⁶⁰ in recent years, much empirical research has been done on psychoanalytic ideas, especially in the framework of the attachment theory and Infant Research.⁶¹ Unfortunately, there seems to have been no serious attempts, even in recent times, to undertake empirical research on the effects of training analysis, e.g. in the perspective of the “outcome” and/or “process” research.⁶² Certainly studies of the subjective satisfaction of analysts who have completed or are just completing their train-

ing cannot be considered to qualify as genuinely scientific, since the possible distortions are only too obvious. Nor does gathering qualitative data from the analytic couple – so as to learn what each of them thinks has taken place in the course of training analysis – count as a scientific method. In any case, since the literature does not appear to offer definite help in identifying the real objectives of training analysis, it becomes even more problematic to transform the objectives into measurable variables. This, in its turn, would seem to give rise to the paradoxical result of rejecting the empirical evidence of the need for change. The problem could, nevertheless, be got round by using empirical evidence drawn from other kinds of research. Some examples follow.

Since it has been shown that the frequency of sessions has a positive effect on the outcome of therapy up to (and not above) the number of two a week,⁶³ one fails to understand the sense of requiring the candidate analyst, of all people, to undergo more than two weekly sessions. One should bear in mind that, even as we write, there are still Institutes where the standard training analysis consists of five 50-minute sessions a week. In most cases the regulation is three or four weekly sessions of at least 45 minutes; in the early ‘80s, it was still true that the Institutes that approved of a training analysis of *only*, so to speak, three hours per week were an exception to the rule.

A further problem involves the possibility that even well-trained analysts may fall victims to temptation and break the rules, as has been shown, for example, by the extensive research of Gabbard and Lester⁶⁴ about analysts who have had sexual relations with their patients. Even though it is inappropriate to offer an *a posteriori* judgment on the success or failure of a training analysis based on subsequent violations of the psychotherapeutic setting, it is legitimate at least to harbor the suspicion that the training analysis did not, in these cases, lead to desirable results. Furthermore, analyses and surveillance on the part of psychoanalytic societies do not make it impossi-

ble for predatory, narcissistic or even partly psychotic personalities to become analysts – although this happens in relatively isolated cases. One might hypothesize that the training analysis in these cases was insufficient, but one could, on the contrary, also suppose that the analysis helped the candidate to acquire a greater capacity for dissimulation rather than more control over his unconscious. The picture is further complicated by the fact that there is, at present, no empirical proof that therapists who have not undergone analysis break the rules more often than orthodox analysts.

In conclusion, one could maintain that considering training analysis from a historical point of view can make it clearer that the system is not immutable and has not been exactly as it now is since the beginning, as the psychoanalytic institutes might lead one to believe. If in the first 25 years of psychoanalytic history no one thought of making training analysis obligatory, in the following 20 years no one imagined it as a super-analysis of infinite duration. And in the 50-plus subsequent years, the subjective and objective motivations for requiring training analysis have never really been clarified, at least as regards its duration. Without a real clarification, the only apparent motivations we are left with are those of an institutional and authoritarian nature,⁶⁵ which bear little relation either to science or to the desirable end of becoming a better therapist.

Notes

¹ See R.S. WALLERSTEIN, *Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy: An Historical Perspective*, in: «International Journal of Psychoanalysis», vol. LXX, n. 4, 1989, pp. 563-591.

² S. FREUD, *Recommendation to Physicians Practicing Psychoanalysis* (1912), in: S. FREUD, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XII, edited by J. STRACHEY, A. FREUD, A. STRACHEY, A. TYSON, Hogarth, London 1958, pp. 111-116, here p. 116.

³ See C.G. JUNG, *Problems of Modern Psychotherapy* (1931), in: C.G. JUNG, *Collected Works*, vol. XVI, edited by G. ADLER, R.F.C. HULL, Princeton University Press, Princeton (NJ) 1966, pp. 53-75;

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