
Free Association's Antecedents: The Precursor Experiments in 1890's Decade

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Abstract. In this paper we discussed the experiments that influenced and leading up to the formulation of the free association. Based on the argument that the adoption of the fundamental rule occurred along with the development of the dreams interpretation technique by the interference of an obscure intuition, we wonder then on the elements that have led to such intuition. Our main argument is that the formulation of free association is corollary of the analytical approach from the psychic. We located, in the problematization of Freud language device and in the Breuer spontaneous resolutions conceptions, two strategic points for the understanding of these precursor experiments. Then we followed the Freudian path toward the defense of a psychic causality in the etiology of the neuroses and the deepening of the unconscious experience. We divided these precursor experiments into five stages that reflect different moments of the technique construction in the 1890s. Here they are: 1) The application of Breuer's and Freud's cathartic method; 2) The psychological analysis with hypnosis; 3) The psychological analysis without hypnosis; 4) The analytical hypnosis and the in-depth investigation and 5) the intensification of the unconscious experience.

Keywords: Free Association; Freud-Breuer; analytical technique.

Antecedentes da Associação Livre: As Experiências Precursoras na Década de 1890

Resumo. Neste trabalho discutimos as experiências que antecederam e influenciaram a formulação da associação livre. Respalado no argumento de que a adoção da regra fundamental ocorreu juntamente com o desenvolvimento da técnica de interpretação dos sonhos pela interferência de uma intuição obscura, perguntamo-nos então pelos elementos que propiciaram tal intuição. Nosso argumento principal é que a formulação da associação livre é o corolário de uma abordagem analítica do psiquismo. Localizamos na problematização do aparelho de linguagem por Freud e na concepção de resoluções espontâneas de Breuer dois pontos estratégicos para o entendimento dessas experiências precursoras. Seguimos daí o percurso freudiano em direção à defesa de uma causalidade psíquica na etiologia das neuroses e ao aprofundamento da experiência do inconsciente. Dividimos essas experiências precursoras em cinco fases que refletem diferentes momentos de construção da técnica na década de 1890. São elas: 1) a aplicação do método catártico por Breuer e Freud; 2) a análise psíquica com hipnose; 3) a análise psíquica sem hipnose; 4) a hipnose analítica e a investigação profunda e 5) a intensificação da experiência do Inconsciente.

Palavras-chave: Associação livre; Freud-Breuer; técnica analítica.

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Antecedentes de la Asociación Libre: Los Experimentos Precursores en la Década de 1890

Resumen. En este trabajo nosotros discutimos los experimentos que antecedieron e influyeron la formulación de la asociación libre. Apoyado en el argumento de que la adopción de la regla fundamental se produjo junto con el desarrollo de la técnica de la interpretación de los sueños a través de la interferencia de una intuición incierta, nos preguntamos por los factores que llevaron a tal intuición. Nuestro principal argumento es que la formulación de la asociación libre es el corolario de un enfoque analítico del psiquismo. Hemos identificado en la discusión del aparato de lenguaje de Freud y en la concepción de resoluciones espontáneas de Breuer dos puntos estratégicos para la comprensión de estos experimentos precursores. Seguimos, por lo tanto, el recorrido freudiano en dirección a la defensa de una casualidad psíquica en la etiología de las neurosis y a la profundización del experimento del inconsciente. Dividimos estos experimentos precursores en cinco fases que reflejan diferentes momentos de la construcción de la técnica en la década de 1890, a saber: 1) La aplicación del método catártico por Breuer y Freud; 2) El análisis psíquico con hipnosis; 3) El análisis psíquico sin hipnosis; 4) La hipnosis analítica y la investigación profunda; y 5) La intensificación del experimento del Inconsciente.

Palabras-clave: Asociación libre; Freud-Breuer; técnica analítica.

Freud's work is full of indications that assign to the free association the pillar condition of the psychoanalytic technique. As a result, we can say, from a historical perspective, that the establishment of the psychoanalytical device aligns with the free association advent.

However, instead of setting up as a sudden turn, the adoption of free association is the result of a long and tortuous experimental path. Thus, even before the fundamental rule, it is possible to follow Freud in an investigation effort in the search for another logic of handling with the speech at the clinic that produces more durable and reliable effects.

After this brief contextualization, we present our work proposal: to rescue and to discuss the Freudian path which leads us to the construction of the free association technique. We will highlight the methodological implications of the approach that Freud makes on the language, from which derives an analytical approach of the technique. Then we will place his ownership of the cathartic method and the transformations that implements from it. We will emphasize the closeness that exists between the changes in the technical framework and the Freud's reading on the psychic division and on the memory processes.

We will distinguish five stages of the development of Freudian technique that precede and prepare the formulation of the free association procedure: 1) The application of Breuer's and Freud's cathartic method; 2) The psychological analysis with hypnosis; 3) The psychological analysis without hypnosis; 4) The analytical hypnosis and the in-depth investigation and 5) the intensification of the unconscious experience. In conclusion, we will bring the first description of the technique which from 1910 will be called free association. Finally, we will list some research lines that we hope to develop in the future.

Method

This is a bibliographic study. We will concentrate on our review the Freudian texts of the 1890s. However, we will refer to later writings, especially those that explain relevant aspects of the technical grounds or offer a retroactive critical view of the path trodden by Freud. We will also make reference to the present authors who questioned this period of Freud's work.

The references to the Freudian text will be based on the *Gesammelte Werke* (GW). The exceptions are in the "Letters to Fliess", on the text on the aphasias and in the Breuer clinical case published in the "Studies on Hysteria" (Anna O.), which are not included in this collection. In relation to the text "Psychic treatment (Animic)", we opted for the *Studienausgabe* due to presenting the correct date of the original publication.

Contextualization and Justification

The interest in the free association issue arose from the academic supervision work with psychology students in the context of professional training in clinic. We note the difficulty of many of them in making use of this technique. Some report the irruption of anxiety states before patients who doubt the fundamental rule, requesting additional information on how to proceed. The embarrassment before the patient silence is also pointed out by many trainees as a critical situation during the clinical care.

We believe that the uncertainty related to the foundations of the free association is the basis of all these complaints. We inferred from these difficulties that the free association, in its elegant and simplicity complex, proves to be difficult to be grasped for those who expect a demonstration through a step-by-step.

Then, being warned of the specificities of the analyst formation (which goes beyond the scope of the university education), we decided to address this difficulty that presents itself in the practice of the students through a theoretical research. We propose to some trainees to investigate the path that led Freud to the formulation of the free association. We start, therefore, from the premise that many of the difficulties and obstacles encountered in the Freudian path toward the free association rise in the practice of those who start themselves in the challenge of driving new treatments from the unconscious reference.

We cannot fail to highlight that the Freudian investigations around the technique provides an alternative to what happened in both the psychology and the psychiatry in the late nineteenth century. Hence, to introduce our issue, we will contextualize briefly the scene of that period in regard to the treatment of the nervous diseases and to the research methodology in the psychology.

On this last point, we highlight Wundt's work, who sought to account for the psychological processes through an analytical and experimental method. His research stemmed from the report of the internal perception of the more elementary sense-perceptual phenomena in order to delineate the psychic synthesis pathways toward the more complex phenomena of consciousness (Figueiredo & Santi, 2010). According to Araujo (2009):

Wundt established a difference between the traditional introspection or self-observation (*Selbsbeobachtung*) on one side, and the inner perception (*innere Wahrnehmung*), on the other (Wundt, 1888a). Only the latter could be used as a methodological resource, due to the fact that it can be enhanced by the experimental control of the external conditions of the experiment, which, according to Wundt, would eliminate the risks of the traditional introspection and would free the psychology of the harsh criticism made by several authors to the introspectionism (pp. 214; 215).

With Beauchesne (1989), we will highlight that the investigation method by Wundt eliminates from the subject truth his spontaneous discourse production, just dignifying it when it becomes experimentally induced observational material. Freud, in turn, rather than leaving from the controlled record of the elementary psychic phenomena, takes as his working material the concrete manifestations of the psychological suffering of his patients.

On the other hand, Janet's ideas on hysteria stressed in the medicine and in the psychiatry. According to Roudinesco and Plon (1998), to Janet the hysteria was the result of a capacity deficiency for synthesis due to a psychological weakness, leading to a narrowing of the field of the consciousness. A central concept for Janet when explaining the hysterical phenomena is the mental automatism, unlike the use that Clérambault does about this term, Janet described it as a conscious psychic, rudimentary and weakened process.

Breuer (Breuer & Freud, 1895/1998), in turn, adopted a shared view by many of his peers. For him, the hysteria stemmed from a diffuse abnormal physiological state, a maturational deficit of the nervous system caused by an innate predisposition. We also emphasize that many doctors and psychiatrists simply ignored the hysterical symptoms, stating that these were lies, scams and simulations.

Marking a clear contrast to Janet's ideas, Freud, in his clinic case, will repeatedly emphasize the richness and the complexity of the psychic processes involved in the formation of the hysterical symptoms. His work is based on the conviction that, in addition to representing a genuine suffering, the

neurotic symptoms are a complex psychic and overdetermined production. In addition, the emphasis on a psychic causality and the critique to the physicalist reductionism put his research in a place of exception in the medicine context at his time.

The First Moment of the Precursor Experiments: The Cathartic Method

In the introduction, we indicated that Freud (1910/1999 and 1940/1999) repeatedly presents the free association as the foundation of the psychoanalytic technique. Then we highlight that, from a historical perspective, the establishment of the analytical device is confused with the adoption of the free association.

In the first chapter of the "History of the Psychoanalytic Movement", Freud (1914/1999) describes how he created his method of dream interpretation. He stated to have come to it as the result of the technical innovations, after deciding, as a result of an "obscure intuition" (*Dunkel Ahnung*) (p. 57) that is to exchange the hypnosis by the free association. These changes, in turn, are crossed by a broad movement of questioning and verification of the fundamentals of his practice, which meets in the challenge of the interpreting the neurotic dreams its culmination.

This project consisted of a broad effort to master simultaneously the "technical, clinical and therapy of neurosis" (Freud, 1914/1999, p. 58). The concatenation of these three elements constituted to Freud a way to prove his assumptions. This proof is only satisfactorily overcome through the interpretation of dreams, whose foundation dates back to the analogy between dream and symptom.

We emphasize that there is no precise references as to when Freud definitively abandon the hypnosis and adopts the procedure of the free association. We know that at the time of the publication of the dreams book, Freud had definitively abandoned the hypnosis procedure and restricted where possible the suggestion usage. (Freud, 1905/1999). Thus, in 1900, as the bases condition of his technique of interpretation, Freud presents, although he has not named as such, a summary description of the free association procedure (Freud, 1900/1999).

Given the above, we argue that for a significant period of experimentations, before the formulation of the foundations of the psychoanalytic method, Freud worked with a treatment for speech with analytical purposes. Hence our main argument: that the free association is the result of a long movement of technical experiments under an analytical orientation.

We understand the term analysis as it is shown in the text "Psychoanalytic therapy paths" (Freud, 1919/1999). That is, assuming that the symptom, the dreams and other psychic manifestations are complex productions, the result of an elaborate effort of synthesis, the treatment consists in decomposing these products already crystallized in their elementary parts in order to enable new avenues to the conflict resolution.

Given this preamble, we clarify what we mean by precursor experiments: those that preceded and influenced the construction of the free association procedure. Such experiences include the technical innovations that supported the, abovementioned, obscure intuition. To shed light on this intuition we consider indispensable to evaluate the experiments carried out under the "Studies on Hysteria" (Freud, 1895/1999), where the technical advances are presented and discussed systematically.

Here we align with Darriba and Bosse (2013) regarding the distinction between therapeutic and analytical purposes in the psychoanalytic clinic. However, we distinguished ourselves from the authors cited by stressing the influence of an analytical project already early in the Freudian route. That said, we enter in the commentary of the first half of the precursor experiments, characterized by the use of the cathartic method by Freud. Here we will follow some reading indications that Rabêlo (2011) states from the book of Breuer and Freud.

Initially, we direct the reader to the reasons that led Freud (1914/1999) to become interested in the cathartic method. According to him, the adoption of this procedure assumes a reservation on the suggestion usage. Rather than suppress the symptoms through prohibitions or orders, Breuer therapy search emptying it of its emotional charge through the speech under hypnosis. In this case, the suggestion under hypnosis is reduced to an instrument for overcoming the resulting amnesia from the psychic division.

Freud (1904/1999) explains the therapeutic effects of the cathartic method from the procedure that he called the "consciousness expansion" (p. 03). To understand this expression, it is necessary to refer to the psychic division model as it is presented by Breuer and Freud (Freud, 1895/1999) on the preliminary report. This model is guided in two consciousnesses: a pathological one and a normal one. The expansion is to make the area of the normal consciousness be expanded to include some content of the pathological consciousness.

Breuer and Freud explain the onset of the pathological consciousness from the influence of an altered state of consciousness – the hypnoid state – whose origin dates back to a neurological, hereditary and congenital disorder, according to Breuer. This anomaly predisposes the psyche to the affections retention, which are prevented from being discharged by the most favorable way to the regulation of the psychic economy (the action, the verbalization and the thought).

We emphasize the unusual way in which Breuer reaches the cathartic method. According to him, (Breuer & Freud, 1895/1996), the cathartic method is not, in the traditional scientific sense, an invention upon whom the merits of this discovery resides. He states that his participation in the process that culminated in the formulation of the cathartic method was limited to follow up with his listening the Anna O.'s speech. In the course of the events, he comes to the description of a therapeutic technique. In that moment of conclusion, Breuer said he was surprised by the product of what he calls a "sequence of spontaneous resolutions" (Breuer & Freud, 1895/1996, p. 66).

We highlight the phrase sequence of spontaneous resolution as well as the astonishment it unleashed in Breuer. There is in this statement the recognition of a psyche update motion, although how such upgrade is processed remain unexplained.

It is up to Freud to investigate how these resolutions are orchestrated. The restriction of the therapeutic goals to the catharsis and the prevalence of an explanation guided in a physicalistic causality are an impediment to that Breuer makes progress in this issue. So, even he incites his patient to produce a series of verbal associations, Breuer's therapy remains confined to its palliative effects, abdicating of intervening in the determining etiological factors of suffering.

At the end of the case of Anna O., Breuer (Breuer & Freud, 1895/1996) proposes the analogy among the processes which govern the dreams formation and those involved in the operation of the pathological consciousness. It is exciting to think that this comment has not gone unnoticed on Freud.

The Psychic Analysis

Although the cathartic method is the starting point of Freud clinic, his route in "Studies" is crossed by the tension between an analytical intent and the maintenance of the Breuer therapeutic bases. Emmy's case is characterized by the coexistence of these two trends and the beginning of the transition from this to that one.

However, to understand this tension, we consider necessary to return to the point where Freud approaches an analytical perspective. In addition, we also believe to be relevant to situate the reasons Freud became interested in the study of the language. The references to the language and to the analytical method are closely related.

In "Animic Treatment (or Psychic)", Freud (1890/1997) questions the dominant mode at his time of thinking about the relationship between the psychic and the somatic. In it, the mental processes and their disorders are taken as products of physiological changes. Thus, the available medical treatments, mostly, are justified in physicalists' interventions. The methods that were not in harmony with this trend did not achieve scientific recognition.

Freud proposes a line of investigation that goes in thinking wrong way from the most of his medical colleagues. He highlights the complexity of the factors involved in determining the psychic processes and, without excluding the legitimacy of the physicalists' theories, defends the existence of a reverse causality: the influence of the psychic in determining the bodily processes. To support this argument, he proposes a careful assessment of the so-called nervous diseases, where a psychic causality intervenes more manifestly. He argues that the traditional physicalists' methods have proven inadequate to treat such diseases.

The Freudian design explained in this paper is to provide a science-driven psychological treatment for nervous diseases. To that end, he points to the word as the main instrument in this treatment modality to be built. Thus, we conclude that the formulation of an explanation of the functioning of language that does not reduce to the neurological model becomes fundamental to Freud. Therefore, right after the publication of such arguments, he turns his attention to the aphasias.

In the 1920s, Freud (1925/1999) refers to the text of the aphasias published in 1891 as a critical and speculative book. We understand critical as subversive, since the reading of the aphasias enables elements, places and relationships reordering which are already marked within a field already formed (the medical clinic). The term speculative, in turn, refers to the fact that the ideas still lacked justification. Freud then rescues some ideas gestated within a physicalist and anatomical reference to reformulate them from an explanatory matrix of psychological and analytical nature.

Initially Freud (1891/2001) promotes a retrospective of the contributions of two neurologists whose works constituted reference in this area: Wernicke and Lichtheim. The backdrop of the debate between the two lies in determining the relationship between the functions of the language and its neurological location. While Lichtheim rests in clinical studies for building a model of "linguistic device" (*Sprachapparat*) (Freud, 1891/2001, p. 44), the Wernicke researches are developed mainly from the dissection *post-mortem*, establishing demonstrable relationship between the language disorders and the brain damages.

Freud points out that Lichtheim recognizes a specific type of aphasia in which there is no injury. The language disorders in this case are explained as the result of functional changes in communication among the brain areas. Lichtheim calls this specific type of aphasia as driving. We have then that Freud is interested in greatly by this possibility, extracting from it wider consequences to think about the language phenomena.

Thus, even before he formed his first psychic device sketch, Freud engages in building a language device model. This model is presented based on the combination of two heterogeneous and interdependent psychic constellations. So we have two groups: the first formed by the associations of word elements; the second, by the associations of the object elements. Each group is decomposed into more elementary parts. The group of associations of the word elements is formed by the written, sound, reading images and by the image of the movement of the lips. The group of the associations of the object elements, in turn, consists by the visual, the tactile and the acoustic images (Freud, 1891/2001).

This language decomposition in material components more elementary calls for, in turn, a new understanding of the memory writing process, which happens to be approached as a complex construct that links different types of records, as association.

At this moment, we are going to comment some passages from the Emmy case in order to demonstrate the insertion in Freud's technique of an analytical perspective from the initial use of the cathartic method. It is evident from the passages that we will highlight an analytical guidance in addressing the memory and language phenomena.

By applying hypnosis and request that Emmy talk about her symptoms, Freud (1895/1999) makes a speech that rescues traumatic scenes of different moments in the life of his patient. He concludes that the reported traumatic episodes sequence was somehow on standby as an organized form of psychic record (1895/1999). Elsewhere, he suggests that these seemingly heterogeneous elements of speech are interpreted as integral parts of the same event, like the various acts of a play (1895/1999).

We realize an innovation in these two comments about the material from the application of the cathartic method. For Freud, unlike Breuer, the pathological consciousness is itself generating syntax of thought. We remind you that, according to Breuer, the catharsis under hypnosis was justified on the assumption of a shortfall in the affections elaboration capacity by the pathological consciousness. Another significant step toward the free association occurs when Freud distances himself from another premise defended by Breuer: that there is no communication between the two modes of consciousness. From there, the way for an intervention in vigil without the use of hypnosis is opened, what Freud (1895/1999) calls "psychological analysis" (p. 158). Originally this procedure serves to support the cathartic method, which remains as a main technique.

These innovations culminate in the first descriptions of the unconscious as a psychic instance which holds its own intentionality. It is no longer to conceive psychic division restricted to the sphere of consciousness as Breuer proposed.

Thereafter Freud applies this explanatory model for evaluating some memory phenomena evident in the treatment of Emmy. The fact that she was able to recall under hypnosis events occurred in the previous session call his attention, these memories that remained inaccessible during the vigil. He also became surprised when dialogues fragments occurring with the patient under hypnosis reappear, in the context of a spontaneous speech. Moreover, he identifies the persistence of resistance even when the patient is in deeper somnambulism.

As he advances in the treatment of Emmy, Freud concludes that the effects of the psychic division are not limited to the memory gaps. He realizes that false connections are formed to fill the void left by the suppressed memories. According to him, these new connections continue to maintain an associative link with the suppressed representations.

The Psychic Analysis Without Hypnosis

Now, we will comment the advances in the technique in Lucy treatment. According to Freud (1895/1999), Lucy, unlike Emmy, showed not to be susceptible to hypnosis. This contingency results in a momentary and experimental modification of the technique. Freud gives up hypnosis and the psychic analysis is the main procedure, which up to now played a supporting role. This circumstance prompts the need to provide more detailed reasons assumptions of psychological analysis. From this effort come much light on the mechanism of communication between the psychic instances (Consciousness and Unconscious) and the origin of the material brought by the associations of the patients.

On this last point, Freud makes a quick tour and resumes the debate on the aphasias. He highlights the limited scope of choice of aphasic patients when they are asked to say a number or date at random. The insistence of certain significant within an associative chain is the common point between the aphasias studies and the hysteria clinic. In the convergence of these fields of research, Freud seeks an explanation for the fact that some figures possess a differentiated psychic accent, channeling the spontaneous associations to a certain direction.

In addition, Freud resumes his works on the suggestion in order to make use of this technique to promote the resistances overcoming. Freud recalls that Bergheim and the fans of Nancy school located the suggestion as the basic phenomenon behind the hypnosis. According to them, the suggestion can even operate in vigil without the need for the state of somnambulism. The suggestion appears, therefore, as an alternative to the hypnosis.

Freud demonstrates his reservation before the hypnosis at various times. For him, while favoring the production of therapeutic effects, the hypnosis masks the factors involved in this process, which moves away the researcher from a more reasoned explanation of the instruments with which he operates. The abandonment of the hypnosis becomes a strategic task for the formation of a technical compatible with the goals of the analytic treatment.

At that time, we find the development of the first conceptions of "repression" (*Verdrängung*) (Freud, 1895/1999, p. 171). The formulation of the repression idea aims to explain the phenomena related to the psychic division in the hysteria from a psychogenic causality. Through the repression, Freud seeks to understand the communication between the psychic instances, stressing the power game involved in this process. Thus, he intensifies the investigation around the resistance, whose existence had been found years earlier (Freud, 1890/1997), when it was described as a psychic force that opposes the symptoms suppression effort by the hypnosis.

Freud then returns to the problem of the language management in the context of the psychological analysis. According to him, the associative links that guide the speech under hypnosis are also present at the vigil. Nevertheless, these potential access routes to repressed memories are partially obliterated due to the dynamic modification of the existing forces in the psyche in the passage from the somnambulism to the vigil. Thus, the challenge is to find a strategy that makes it possible to pass by the words the memories that are unavailable to the voluntary recall while the vigil (Freud, 1895/1999).

As a result of this formulation, we notice that the pathogenic memories may not be available for being recalled but they still constitute a record in the psyche. Another possibility is the recall lies fragmented or undressed of its original emotional charge due to the loss of the associative links.

Freud is led to recognize the loyalty of the memories with regard to the registration of the experiences affectively more significant. To this finding he gives the status of paradigm and assumption of his practice (Freud, 1895/1999). Thus, he concludes that his patients, strictly speaking, know everything that has a pathogenic significance and it is for the doctor / therapist to create conditions for them to speak.

However, Freud warns us that for these most significant memories manifest it is necessary for the patient to learn to suspend his judgment and go down to speak systematically of all his thoughts, even those taken by useless and hindering. On the side of the therapist, it is required that makes no concession to the objections of the patient that removes his responsibility on the effects of his own speech. He adds that not to give in to these objections it is fundamental the firm conviction on the assumption of the psychic analysis. He points out that on his part that confidence was only achieved with great difficulty.

At the end of the case of Lucy, Freud sets out the direction in which the treatment should follow: "The therapy consisted here in constraining the split up psychic group to meet with the I-consciousness" (Freud, 1895/1999, p 185). We have, therefore, the recognition of two forces: one driven by unconscious - here called the split up psychic group – which tends to be updated; the other, the resistance, located in the I-consciousness system.

The Analytical Hypnosis and the In-Depth Investigation

We will outline some presents arguments in the Elisabeth case and in the final chapter of "Studies on Hysteria". Freud begins treating Elisabeth applying a variant of the psychic analysis called "analytical hypnosis" (Freud, 1895/1999, p. 237). Here the use of the hypnosis is located and timely. It is no longer a prerequisite for the treatment, as in the cathartic method. The hypnosis is only used when the resistance appears more intensely. The analytical hypnosis focus is, thus, in locating points of resistance and in the overcoming by the hypnosis.

This technique is presented in the review of a clinical vignette of Sophie patient. The method applied in Elisabeth, strictly speaking, does not fit the description of the analytical hypnosis. Freud even tries to use this technique, but do not get the expected effect. When using hypnosis, he can only give rise to light somnambulism, which is insufficient to trigger the state of "expanded consciousness" (Freud, 1895/1999, p. 208).

It is interesting to note how Freud justifies the use of the hypnosis. It is a shortcut that can take a more direct way to the pathological reminiscences. Hence, when dispensing the hypnosis, the treatment continues for a longer bypass. Opting for this deviation is justified from advances in the explanation of the resistance dynamics.

Freud says that with Elisabeth he could achieve a complete analysis of a case of hysteria for the first time. For this to happen, he reports that it was necessary to intuitively develop a procedure which was later raised to a method status and applied intentionally. This concerns the "in-depth investigation" (Freud, 1895/1999, p. 201), which consists in the extraction or removal by layers the pathological material, in a linear and chronological form. There arises a comparison of the excavation technique in archeology and the analytical research.

At this point, Freud still feeds the expectation of finding the matrix symptom in the reminiscent of a traumatic event. However, the caveat is that there are several layers of memory that should be removed until it reaches the original pathological experience, which he advocates being child nature – for back to a distant past – and sexual. Thus, these intermediate layers are substitutes and updates from this first traumatic experience.

Freud points out that the treatment of Elisabeth proved to be one of the toughest he conducted so far and that the construction of the clinical report was faced with the same difficulties in treatment. The

difficulty to which he refers is to identify the link between the story of suffering by the patient and its determinant cause.

A contingency influences Freud to give up the analytical hypnosis. He notes that, instead of the traumatic experiences succumb to the amnesia – as occurs more often in cases of hysteria – Elisabeth record shows that the traumatic memories were from the outset accessible to the consciousness. In Freud's words, it is as if she had a secret instead of a foreign body in her consciousness.

We remind you that, according to Breuer explanation, the retention of the affection in the pathological consciousness necessarily have as correlate the amnesia of the traumatic experiences. According to this reading, it would be superfluous in the specific case of Elisabeth any therapeutic effort that operated in order to expand the awareness, since the supposedly pathological content is already available out to the consciousness.

Faced with this impasse, Freud bet on the possibility of finding other links previously hidden that offered a more satisfactory explanation of the illness determinants factors. That is, he admits the unfinished character of the theory at hand and submits it to the confrontation with the clinical fact. Thus, Freud puts every effort in the historicizing work of Elisabeth's symptom and life.

To reduce the influence of the external stimuli and thus to engender a closer state to the hypnotic somnambulism, Freud asks Elisabeth to close her eyes and to relax. Then, he asks her to reproduce what appears in the most superficial layer of her memories (Freud, 1895/1999). Elisabeth lying on the couch, he turns to her saying: "At the moment I touch your forehead, you will tell me without omission which arise in your inner eye or whatever evoked by your memory" (Freud, 1895/1999, p. 208).

We emphasize the visual character of these recommendations. Another metaphor used to instruct the associations production follows this same trend: proceed as you were "reading a large picture book, whose pages were flipped before your eyes" (Freud, 1895/1999, p. 218.). Freud highlights the task of transpose into words the emotional experiences related to these images evoked by the association under the suggestion condition.

As he advances in this historicizing work, Freud has the opportunity to follow the fluctuations of the patient state. He notes that many variations in the symptoms, in the mood and in the affective states are triggered by current experiences that retroactively mobilize memories from other periods. The work of analysis is to monitor the associations that permeate this psychic update from the past and then to encourage other ways to the conflict elaboration.

On the dynamics of psychic forces mobilized in the treatment, it is worthwhile for us to stop in one sentence: "The resistance that repeatedly opposes the effective reproduction of the traumatic scene corresponds in the reality to the energy with which the irreconcilable representation (with the I) was expelled" (Freud, 1895/1999, pp. 222-223). This sentence shows an equation: for the analytical purposes are produced, the force exerted by the repressed unconscious representations added to the suggestion pressure should overlap the intensity of the resistance. It follows from this argument, as Baratto highlighted (2009), that the analysis by suggestion requires from the physician the investment of an energy charge to destabilize the balance of the powers maintained by the resistance. In this process, according to Freud (1895/1999), the doctor uses his personal prestige to modulate the patient's attention, creating favorable conditions for the verbalization of the substitutes of the repressed experience.

The suggestion happens in the certification by the doctor that the unfailingly the produced associations will lead to the original pathological memory and in the demanding of full cooperation and attention by the patient. The pressure (*Druck*) in the forehead embodies this psychic pressure mode (*Drängen*) (Freud, 1895/1999) exerted by the analyst.

According to Freud, this is an effect of resistance when the patient claims to have no idea to associate. For him, the resistance exerts a constant criticism which selects and limits the contents to be verbalized. Hence, the decision for intensifying the suggestive pressure to reach the tip of an associative chain.

About the overcoming resistance by the suggestion, Freud proposes the analogy with a stuck door that to be opened, requires the application of a certain amount of force on the latch (Freud, 1895/1999). Despite this image, the effort expended by the doctor cannot be taken by a mechanical action.

Therefore, Freud confesses that he could not consider to treat someone who causes him disgust or is not able to arouse him some sympathy.

The Intensification of the Unconscious Experience

If in the "Studies on Hysteria" the discussion on the technical happens in a systematic and detailed way, after 1895 the presentation of the advances in this area occur in a fragmented and sparse mode. With regard to the management of the speech, it is possible to find some specific information in the "Letters to Fliess" (Freud, 1962).

Nevertheless, the changes in the technique that occur during this period are critical for understanding the genesis of the psychoanalytic device (Vidal, 2010). It is not rare, the discussion on the technique merges with the metapsychological theorizing. We believe this is due to the inseparability between the use of the analytical technique and the reference to the unconscious as emerges in the writings of this period (Tessier, 2012).

For us, the most important change of that period which paves the way for the free association is the reformulation of the neurosis etiological explanation, whose emphasis is moved to a model based on the reference to the fantasy. Here we follow the Dunker reasoning (2011), who discusses the clinical fundamental structure and then he presents the medical clinic and psychoanalytic particularities. Dunker points out that the passage from that to this implies in a broad reformulation of the relations constituted among etiology, semiology, diagnosis and treatment.

You can place an important link of these transformations at the end of the year 1896, in the letter 52, when an advance in explaining the constitution of the memory processes put in motion a radical reformulation of the neurosis etiology. In the referred letter, Freud (1962) explains the memory as a dynamic structure formed by layers, each one having specific operating modes and record. It results the need to reflect on the production of recalls as a complex process composed by registrations (*Niederschrift*), rearrangements (*Umordnung*), re-entry (*Umschrift*) and translations (*Übersetzung*) of the original content in the passage from one level to the other (Freud, 1962). So, he located the repression (*Verdrängung*) as an operation that focuses on the border among these layers, imposing a distortion of the content (Freud, 1962). The vicissitudes and failures of this process reflect the traumatic nature of the reminiscences. Henceforth, the trauma is no longer conceived as a direct result of the lived experiences in the reality.

A few months after the letter 52, Freud produces a series of comments about the fantasy. Firstly, he highlights the fantasy influence on the symptoms formation. Then, he explains its origin from a retroactive signification process (*nachträglich*) of memories fragments (Freud, 1962).

In April 25th 1897, Freud applies his analytical reading of the psyche to the description of the fantasy genesis in the manuscript M. According to him, the fantasy comes from the "unconscious junction" (*Unbewusste Zusammenfügung*) (Freud, 1962, p. 176) of lived scenes, which are fragments of what is heard and determined trends (we understand as libidinal motions). Soon after, he writes: "The fantasy happens by (a process of) melting (*Verschmelzung*) and deformation (*Entstellung*) analogous to the decomposition (*Zersetzung*) of a chemical substance that is melted (*Zusammengesetzten*) with another" (Freud, 1962, p. 176).

In the letter of July 7th 1897, Freud states that there are no impediments to the unconscious, by indirect means, to produce higher mental formations. He concludes with a reference to the technique, that from then "begins to prefer a path as being the natural" (Freud, 1962, p. 184). These advances lead to a creative crisis, whose summit can be found in the letter of September 21st, when he claims not to believe more in his neurotic (the hypothesis of the traumatic etiology, based of his neurosis theory). From that point, mentions on his self-analysis are proliferated. On May 28th 1899, in a concise and laconic way, Freud writes about having completed a step of his investigation and declares that his technique is sufficiently complete. In August of the same year he announced the conclusion of the dreams book.

Therefore, Freud links this technical transformation movement to opt for a more natural and spontaneous direction of the clinical work. Such changes, in turn, rely on the confidence in the power of resoluteness of the unconscious processes by an analytical approach.

We would also like to highlight an excerpt from the article "On the Mechanism of Forgetfulness" (Freud, 1899/1999). This small text begins with a note on the role of attention in the forgetting mechanism in the motor aphasia. Freud highlights a common reaction in the patients who suffer from this disease. They unnecessarily excel in reaching the forgotten word by means of a tensioning voluntary attention. Then, he notes that the best strategy for this situation is intentionally to divert the interest of the word that they want to remember. Freud then applies the same strategy to analyze a proper forgotten. Thus, the modulation of attention happens to be a viable alternative to the suggestion usage.

Conclusion: First Description of the Technical

The syntagma free association as well as the denominations fundamental and main rule only arise in the Freudian text from 1910 (Freud, 1910/1999). Nevertheless, we can already place in the dreams book (Freud, 1900/1999) a protoconceptual description of this procedure. It consists in the condensate of the experimentations around the technique accumulated in the previous decade. We can define the direction that marks Freud research during this period as a movement toward the technical clearance to adapt it to the analytical objectives. It is evident the choice to the simple or natural way, in order to privilege the spontaneous manifestations of the unconscious resolutions as the main driving force of the treatment.

This protoconceptual description (Freud, 1900/1999) consists of three areas: 1) The suspension of the affection repulsion and the intellectual and moral judgment; 2) a change in the attention operating mode, whose focus is diverted from the external events to the internal processes (intrapsychic); 3) the impartial and reliable expression of what is immediately present to the consciousness.

In the future, we would like to investigate the continuation of the joint conceptual work around the free association. Freud recognizes the problematic nature of the attention modulation and he will seek to address this problem from other additional technical procedures (floating attention and transfer) and from some metapsychological developments (the more precise delimitation of the relationship between attention and perception in the context of the two principles of the psychic operation). In addition, we consider important to situate the resumption of the discussion on the suggestion, given that Freud admits his residual permanence in the context of the psychoanalytic treatment. We also hope to gather and to discuss the metaphors used by Freud in order to illustrate the technique of the free association.

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