

Garden Party in the Ferenczi House, June 1, 2012 – during the Faces of Trauma Conference, Budapest

Welcome speech at the garden party by Judit Mészáros

Dear Colleagues, dear Friends!

Hardly more than 80 years ago, in the middle of June 1930, Sándor Ferenczi sent the following lines to his friend, the legendary director of the famous Baden-Baden sanatorium, Georg Groddeck:

“...we have bought a villa, consisting of three floors with a garden, over the Ofner hill and will be moving in towards the end of this month. So we have become homeowners at the same time as you. Another apartment on the first floor will be let. It was a good buy (for approximately 70,000 Marks) but the necessary alterations will be rather expensive (around 30,000!). I look forward to getting fresh air and sun, which I greatly missed here.” (Ferenczi to Groddeck, Budapest, 15 June, 1930)

Now you are standing in the garden of this villa, in the company of some trees from the time, although Ernest Jones’s red roses, which he sent from London to Ferenczi and which used to be the jewels of the garden, do not embellish the path leading to the fountain any more.

This is the house where Ferenczi spent the last three years of his life, but despite this short period of time, such works were born in this inspiring environment that truly stirred up contemporary thinking concerning, for example, the genesis of trauma or the credible communication of psychotherapeutic relationships. Many American patients visited this house as well, including Elizabeth Severn and Clara Thompson. They both gained world fame in professional circles for different reasons. Clara Thompson became one of the founders of the renowned William Alanson White Institute in New York, with Erich Fromm and Harry Stack among

others, where Ferenczi's innovative views were built into the system of healing and training.

And this is the house where the flat that includes Ferenczi's office was purchased for the International Ferenczi Center and Archives by the Sándor Ferenczi Society and the International Ferenczi Foundation. Behind this simple sentence there is a 6-year-long fundraising process and an enormous amount of work, which is necessary for the realization of such a dream.

Therefore, first of all, I would like to say thank you to our 269 donors, including 19 institutions and 250 private persons.

The International Ferenczi Center includes the Archives whose materials have been collected by the members of the Ferenczi Society from the invaluable heritage of several generations of the Budapest School during the past 25 years. Some of these materials have already been published as research results, others are available for the researchers of the present and the future.

The purchase of Ferenczi's former office, the place and what it symbolizes, also means that Hungarian psychoanalysis has been given a topographical number in the world, just like the Freud Museum in Vienna and London. It depends on us also what kind of intellectual workshop, research spot and cultural center will develop on the basis of this intellectual heritage. The House is open for smaller scientific meetings, seminar, lectures, visitors, and all of you can join and create present and future of the Ferenczi Center.

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On this occasion we welcome you, the participants of this housewarming garden party with love, and we would like to share with you from the bottom of our hearts the joyful significance of the day.