

# Mother-Child Bonding-Analysis in the Prenatal Realm: The Strange Events of a Queer World

---

*Jenő Raffai*

Országos Pszichiátriai és Neurológiai Intézet, Budapest, Hungary

**Keywords:** Mentalization of physical representations, basic representation of immune war, the mother's phantasy of self-reproduction, externalization of the destructive mother representative, fusion in the uterus

**Abstract:** The greatest fight is the implantation of the new being in the uterus: Here he fights for his life, and his mother fights for her egg-cell which went astray to fuse with a foreign body while she wants to realize her phantasy of reproduction to create herself by herself alone. These fights are registered and mentalized by the new being. As his mother wants to externalize him he must externalize his enemy-mother to keep alive and build up a positive relation with his mother. The case study illustrates the letal outcome of the fight as well as the overcoming to live and the relation to the perinatal memory of the mother herself.

**Zusammenfassung:** *Mutter-Kind-Bindungsanalyse im pränatalen Bereich: Die sonderbaren Ereignisse einer seltsamen Welt.* Mit der Einnistung des neuen Wesens in der Uteruswand beginnt der größte Kampf: Hier kämpft das neue Wesen um sein Leben, und seine Mutter kämpft darum, daß ihre fremd gewordene Eizelle ihre Reproduktionsphantasie realisiert, ganz aus sich allein sich neu zu schaffen. Die Kämpfe werden im Körper des neuen Wesens registriert und dann auch mentalisiert. Wie die Mutter es als fremd abstoßen will, so muß es seinerseits das Bild der feindlichen Mutter externalisieren, damit es überleben und beide sich auf ein Miteinanderleben einigen können. Das Fallbeispiel illustriert beides, die tödliche Folge des Kampfes und das Überleben sowie die Beziehung zur eigenen perinatalen Erinnerung der Mutter.

\*

---

This paper was presented at the 2nd Cologne Conference (work group Cologne of the ISPPM) "Vom Wunder des Überlebens – Das Pränatale im postnatalen Raum", February 13–15, 1998

Translation into English by Helga Blazy

Correspondence to: Dr. phil. Jenő Raffai, Országos Pszichiátriai és Neurológiai Intézet, Hűvösvölgyi út 116, H-1022 Budapest

Before a case study from mother-child bonding analysis will illustrate the strange shaded world of this bonding which in many ways is richer and more differentiated than the relations after birth, I like to describe the natural history of those early representations coherently which we were able to find in the deep psychoanalytic process and which we published earlier (f.i. Raffai 1996a, 1996b, 1997). This will be followed by a description of the method of the mother-child bonding analysis and finally by a case study.

Object of the analysis are the body sensations as manifestations of the physical representations. The symbols are secondary representations of the primary affective states which allow the child to control and manage his feelings via symbolization (Fónagy 1997).

I briefly touch the question of psychosis here: The essential processes of the psychoses, especially schizophrenia, do not enter the world of mental representations controlled by symbolization; they stay in the realm of non-controlled physical representations. Analyzing the body sensations we come to the sphere of physical representations and control and change them via personification into mental representations. To put it with Freud, however, a bit paraphrased: Where body sensation was will be thought which later on becomes a memory.

Part of the physical representation to my opinion is mentalized during developmental events and these proceedings show the building of higher psychic structures. To put it differently: The child mentalizes part of his physical representations helped by his innate cognitive capacity. For the mentalization of another part the mirror function of the mother is important. Here is the problem of the self built up from representations. These representations are the internalization of counter-effects of two related beings. Modern perinatal exploration does not describe the self of the child as a physical unity but motivated by feelings and thoughts which recognizes his own development through the image created by the other (Davidson 1983). Thus the mirror function of the mother is very important for the development of the self. Later on we shall see that the importance is still more marked in the intrauterine mother-child bonding. The mother does not mirror the child's physical manifestations only but his feelings, too. Her mirroring, however, is not quite equivalent. The small child compares his mother's image to his own feelings and learns from the symbolic play with them to reach control over his affective and physiological functions. The model is: Perceiving the mirroring feelings of his parents the baby realizes the secondary representations of his own primary affective states, and this realization enables him to reach a conscient perception and control of his feelings (Gergely 1995).

The lack or distortion of the early mirror functions is followed by a later problem to discern reality from representations. If, f.i., the mother mirrors the feelings of her child without a change and on her face appears the same feeling which the child signals to her, angst maybe, while she wants to regulate his affective state, the angst of the child cannot but escalate. If the mother doubts the child's despair or regards it as sickness or tiredness she spoils the communication of its sense and makes it senseless. Then the child lacks an adequate image of his state in the conscience of the other and thus lacks the possibility for symbolic representation of his psychic states (Targett and Fónagy 1996, Bion 1977). These distortions of mirroring are important for the genesis of borderline-diseases.

As we know today originally the self is a physical unity which results from the internalisation of counter-effects of two communicating beings. Postulating the self as a physical unity we accentuate the continuity of ontogenesis as Freybergh (1996) described it in contrast to the idea of discontinuity represented by child researchers which identify the genesis of the self with the exploration of the baby after birth. There are many investigations which show an important sensorial capacity, an affective and cognitive well operating child, complicated interaction with his mother and the postnatal surrounding (Janus 1991). Stronger become the shapes and the societal dimensions which rather are to be understood as representations of projections of the intrauterine bonding (f.i. Blazy 1996).

Helped by the mother-child analysis we can enter the representations of the physical self and correct them consciously so that the baby later on will have the possibility to start his own developmental way not prescribed by maternal representations and win autonomy.

The basic representation is built from the internalisations of the fight for implantation. The feeling of angst as internalisation of the war between the child who wants to establish himself within his mother's world and the mother whose immune system wants to destroy him enters the feeling of the child. This is the price for his survival. Together with the feeling the child internalizes the threat and order for destruction from the maternal selfreproduction- and eternity-phantasy. Inside the uterus is no room for a foreign body. He has to die as the uterus is the space for selfreproduction, for self-rebirthing. This maternal phantasy may be partly of immune origin as the immune system protects her organism against foreign bodies. However, the contrary may be possible: The history of the own implantation of the mother as foetus can activate the internalized representative and mobilize the immune system.

In any case the immune war is mentalized and thus reaches a higher level than the biological, and possibly the child is saved by that. The mother takes some of her strength off the war and builds her selfreproduction phantasy from it. In an early expulsion this event may not have started yet. But a selfreproduction phantasy is always there, all of us have internalized it. Our desire for eternity thus originally was the desire of our mother for eternity. She is the source. Probably the child when internalizing the counter-effects of the fight for implantation does not relate with the internalized selfreproduction phantasy of his mother but with that of his grandmother, too. The uterus thus is the meeting point of the generations and we leave not only our genes but our representations as well.

The child externalizes the internalized maternal selfreproduction phantasy and the feeling of threatening. If he would not externalize it as a foreign body life might not exist. What is the essence of the maternal selfreproduction phantasy? There is no relation possible with a foreign body, only the reproduction of the own body is possible. If a foreign body enters it has to be destroyed. If the child did not try to externalize this phantasy in parts or completely he would be destroyed due to the impulses of the phantasy, because as a foreign body he is not allowed to survive. He would destroy himself, due to the effect of the internalized foreign suggestion he would commit suicide. This is the second possibility connected to an early expulsion. Here the maternal selfreproduction phantasy works effectively. The child cannot expulse it as a foreign body, it destroys the child. In deepest

psychotic states we find these catastrophic feelings: The patients feel that they have no right to live and survive, they must perish.

The internalized destructive mother is as well a foreign body in the child like the child in the mother. The destructive mother representative can only become tamed and controlled by a succession of externalizations and internalizations of the worked through reflections of these externalizations. After the immune war the maternal organism is no longer that elementarily threatening and hostile. It becomes rather soft and acceptive. Externalizing the destroying maternal representative changes the mother and due to her state she mirrors this to the child. The child identifies with the corrected mother image and internalizes it. Probably this is a never ending and often repeated long process. The more time passes the better are the chances to survive for the child because he has got more possibilities to work on the destructive mother representative helped by the more peaceful maternal surrounding.

When we search for the answer to that enigma of human life how two beings who regard each other as foreign and want to destroy each other become caring, accepting and loving each other we can now point at the event of correction described above. Both sides do an enormous work to realize this change.

Going a step further now we see that this is not the only representation which develops in the early phase of life and makes the bonding effectful. As a new motive emerges the strange relation which the mother has to her own egg-cell and which is actualized when the egg-cell parts to reach the meeting point to have a date with a foreigner. The most original and oldest wish of the mother is her own rebirth in her own uterus by her own cells. Seen from her point of view her wish is quite natural: Why should another being develop from her cell and not herself? Why shouldn't she live forever? However, evolution had a different aim. The wish for selfreproduction and eternity nowadays is realized in the kloning experiments.

It is a great deception and a deep pain for the mother that her egg-cell has left her and fused with a foreigner. Thus it puts the biological clock to zero and starts life again as another being. Between mother and developing child arises a huge temporal gap. Both start their temporal journeys in opposite directions and withdraw from each other. The mother moves outward in time, the child inward. The mother slowly reduces, the child builds himself up. Meistermann (1991) precisely explores this situation. We add some annotations.

The egg-cell, originally containing the maternal hope for eternity, limits the maternal life to her own ageing body by its fusion and change. At this moment the hope for eternity breaks down and it will be the child's sin that the maternal life has become limited and restricted. She makes the child feel it and the child realizes that he has expropriated his mother's life, that his life develops at the price of her destruction. A new chapter in their bonding begins. The mother tries to win her lost egg-cell back and refer it to herself to reconstruct the original state. What arose together has to die together. There must not be an exception to any cell. For a long time she tries to dissolve the fusion to win her cell back. Otherwise her pain would become too great when feeling that life is limited, that it was not she to revive but a foreign and even hostile being. This is an extraordinary situation. Possibly the mother refers her cell in those cases when she absorbs the fertilized egg-cell. The absorption results from the suspense of destructive rivalry which

comes from the unfulfilled wish for eternity. The mental representation says: If I cannot revive you should neither. Better we perish both than you alone live longer than me.

It might be understood here that the bonding is not done by the foreign fatherly part of the zygote but by the special maternal relation to her own egg-cell and by the destruction of the illusions and hopes connected to it. With fertilization the child inevitably becomes the destructor of the maternal eternity.

It is more than a small devaluation to move from eternity to mortality, accompanied by bad feelings of imperfection, frailty and provisionality with which the mother has to cope when she realizes that her egg-cell not only has to fuse with a foreigner but has to change as well. When we mentalize this event we find new problematic feelings: Would her egg-cell remain her own it would die. Within the incapability of her egg-cell she discovers her own mortality.

We see, the mother-child bonding is loaded with difficult emotions from the immune war and the deeply unconscious maternal wish concerning her own egg-cell. The proceedings take ten to twelve weeks but the working through of the trauma takes a lifetime and probably remains unfulfilled. The maternal wish for absorption and referring her cell is manifested in every more sublimated and less lethal parental wish and in everybody's wish to model the other due to our own image, to homogenize him, to make him continue our life and not live his life. In last consequence the other should not exist but only me.

Evolution has given immortality to the species and not to the individual. From cloning we know that it could have been different: biologically immortality of the individual being is possible – if in spite of or together with immortality of the species is a question not yet possible to be answered. Nowadays they exclude each other, the (relative) immortality of species is due to mortality of the individual. From trauma of loss of individual immortality, however, follows the suggestion of an eternity bearing culture and civilisation – instead of an original unity a multicoloured diversity. But we know about the price which humanity during history had to pay that there was not only one system, one religion, one colour, one thought, etc. Maybe we perceive already that the dissolving of unity will confront us with something unbearable which due to the progressive or destructive working through the trauma will build up or destroy, will be slow or hindering. Thinking about the construction of scientific revolutions: In the paradigmas of scientific unions and the related attachment the longing for eternity is working. The scientist who goes astray and becomes different, who creates a new paradigm and thus nihilates the former cannot expect much good: Death by fire or a sublimated type of death, expellation of the scientific union.

After this short cultural review let us unfold the mother-child bonding further whose tenseness develops for some time along the line of development: The differences become more shaped. Not the same has been created but two beings which differ more and more in their life-worlds. But while the child has got access to his mother's life and is within it the mother is expelled from the lifeworld of her child. As she has not yet accepted that the small being within her is not herself she already has to realize that she has no access to his lifeworld. It is an important aspect that the mother is excluded. The world of the child consists of differentiation and growing, the mother cannot, she remains herself. The contrast

is dramatic: The mother sees herself in the mirror of her child creating himself: She is imperfect, frail, mortal, she is not a partner for rivalry. She can try to withhold the child's development: If I cannot be able for such productions you should neither.

At this point we start mother-child bonding analysis, the creative answer to the development of the child. As the child creatively develops himself so his mother should be able via bonding analysis to creatively manage their relation, even since the moment of implantation and to answer and mirror the child's actions. The early contact is utmost important seen from the bonding analysis, the mirroring function of the accepting mother beside the destructive mother; helped by this the child becomes able to work through the destructive representations effectively. The destructive mother representative as a foreign body in the self of the child will be expelled by that, he will be worked through very early to make the child enter his way of development.

The mother-child bonding analysis which Hidas and I (1987) worked out is a direct and unhindered contact with the child via fusion with the uterus. The mentalization is done via personification of the counter-effect of bonding by feelings, and helped by the maternal mirroring of his own actions the child learns how to rule and precize his movements and his affective states, he differentiates himself from his mother and realizes the differences. The accordance between them results in a finer perception of their signals und again finer and more empathetic answers. In one bonding-analysis, f.i., the child never touched the spot again where he once had hurt his mother.

Now we turn to the case study of Nóra and hope that it will open a new perspective to early contact and start a new chapter in the history of prenatal psychology.

I saw Nóra for mother-child bonding-analysis in the eighth week of gestation. She had read my book and had got interested. The child was planned. Before she had had an abortion as she became pregnant casually. Due to our experiences we recommend two to three sessions a week. But Nóra was much occupied she could not manage to come that often. The sessions took place until birth; after birth I met Nóra and her baby.

The largest part of the first four sessions was devoted to the fight with her intrauterine and birth-experiences, f.i. "I feel as if my head is splitting. My hands are benumbed. I feel a pressure on my head. Meanwhile the baby is silent and does not move. When I feel better the baby begins to move and to fidget. He senses much, he knows much about me."

*5th session, 5th August 1997*

There is a noise outside.

N: Now the baby is frightened. Or, possibly, I project my own feelings in the baby. He has stopped moving, anyway.

I: So certainly he was frightened.

N: I try to calm him down. He is fine. He thankfully nestles to my uterus. I feel as if he looks down and suckles his thumb. – There is the feeling of pressure again. As if I were split. Formerly the baby did not react to those feelings but now he does. He moves continuously as we talk about him. As if he wanted to protest.

I: He protests against what?

N: I have reached the complete fusion with the baby. It is as if he protests with his movements that I do not accept him. When the fusion came he calmed down. Now he tries

to go to the left side. I can only think that his brother was on the left side. As if he wants to take his place. Now I have surrounded and carressed him. Now he obviously becomes loose and does not pull so much. My uterus resists and the baby feels it. I am already reconciled to the events, however, my uterus and the baby maybe not yet. As if my uterus were hard at that spot.

Comment: Here Nóra combines for the first time the abortus to the state of her uterus and the feelings of the baby.

*6th session, 10th September*

The first session after a long summer-break.

N: The long break was not good for our bonding. The baby retreated to the left side of the uterus. He looks for security there. Possibly this is the lack of our being together. – I feel my uterus soft, tender, creative as never before.

I: That should be good for the baby too.

N: Certainly. The baby has given a signal. He pricked me at a spot where he never did before. I have a strange feeling, a feeling of oppression. I feel it from each side now. It is oppressing. Even on my face. Now only on my head and my arms. It is over. – As if the baby were touched at the same time. And then he knocked three-four times. – As if for a second I had seen a strange light; at the same time he started to move. He is on the left side again. He uses to retreat there whenever he feels frightened. When I saw the doctor he pressed a stethoscope on my belly. Then the baby cowered there for half an hour. Now he is more loose again. He seems to be more calm. He was never like this. He is quite in the centre. As if he had nodded. I never felt this before. Now he moves more lively with tender round movements. Now he is quite upward with his head at my navel. I like this; the skin is thin at the navel and I can touch his head. As if he would touch the wall of the uterus with his small head. He has noticed that there is now way further. And now he slips into himself as if he were insulted that he cannot go further. But he does not give in. He starts anew only a little more downward. Now he turns his head into a birth position. Suddenly I feel him heavy as if he has pressed on me inside. How strange, there was a pulsating movement in my head. There is a connection to the light as it became light and dark. It was as if one had turned my neck. For a moment I felt that it was dark on my right side and the left side of my face saw light. This frightened me much. And now I have a headache. As if light and darkness had changed some times. The baby now moves in the rhythm of my breathing. Calm, reflected, as if he were not a baby but a wise grown-up. It is possible that he has become much more intelligent and learned much today.

Comment: The mother can follow her baby with the camera of her inner feelings so sharply and exactly as if we regard a film. The mother's own intrauterine experiences are activated and colour her bonding to the baby. There are two important moments: Whenever mother's own experiences appear in the bonding the baby remains immobile and then starts to move again as if he perceives the events which radically differ in the nature of the actual bonding. I quote from the last feelings of the mother: "Today he has become much more intelligent." We can conclude that he has become richer with the experiences from his mother. The intrauterine experiments by Sallenbach and equal experiments done by other investigators let us know that the children become immobile after unexpected events. Within this time they perceive the events, differentiate them and work on their inner answers. We stress the importance to have the same answer in a natural lively process without experimental surrounding.

*7th session, 16th September*

N: I feel my uterus shaped like an egg and very soft and able to be shaped. The child moves as if he would not like to talk to me.

I: Why?

N: During the last days I left him a bit apart. We did not play so much together as before.

I: Do you feel he is insulted?

N: Yes, I felt for a short time that he turns his back to me. Now he has become more active again. He feels that I am occupied with him only. Now he bends upon something. I suppose he sucks his thumb. He becomes loose again. Now he starts to push. – Now I feel as if I were pushed, forced, hurt from the right side. I am sunken into the couch, as if something is surrounding me.

I: As if you were in the uterus yourself.

N: Yes, I thought so. But while pushing and expelling felt very bad sinking into feels very good. The baby is unusually quiet. As if he still does not want to talk to me. I neither feel him to be there.

I: Did he hide?

N: Yes. It is strange that he still can hide because he is so big. I don't know why he hides. He lies downward with his head and his back. I felt a big billowing now, then it went into my uterus. The billowing was as if I myself were in the uterus. Now I moved the small one. I wanted him to turn and he really turned. It is a good feeling to know that he knows what I want. Now he is no more angry with me. He shows me all his strength. He moves upward to my heart. Last week he did so for the first time and no more until now. This is a signal of a very narrow trustful relation. Now as if he tried a somersault, I think he did not succeed. He is too big now to do such acrobatics. Now as if he played with the water with his small hands. So he finished to turn as I feel him now with his face upward. Now the guy has retreated to the left side and rolled in himself. As if he wanted to expand himself. I am curious, why. Mostly he retreats when he is frightened. He tries to go left with hands and feet. Suddenly my idea is he might not go there because he is frightened but because it is a new game. He is boxing with his hands. I felt his hair, too. He did not do so for a long time. He expands in full length as if to show how large he is.

Comment: We should experience the intensive lively bonding with the to and fro answers and mirroring. There is a new moment when the mother realizes that for the first time the baby moves upward to her heart. The experiences of other bonding analyses show as well: When the relation is fine and without disturbance the babies move upward near to their mothers' heart. When the relation is disturbed they move far away to the corner of the uterus which is most far from the maternal heart and try to become unreachable. Via distance they announce to the mother that they are not concordant. Now we witness this context between the heart and the positive relation. We leave some sessions.

*10th session, 17th October*

N: I have chaotic feelings. I felt again the numbness from my own birth. I feel a big chaos. I feel the numb, pushing side of it, my head shivers. As if I cannot decide who is born and who delivers. The baby is somewhat embarrassed, somewhat disturbed. – I walk more in the direction of my own birth. I feel to be drawn to the left. My head is pushed to the left. I feel better now, the embarrassment has gone. I only feel the body sensation now. Maybe someone turned me to the left. It was a very disagreeable pulling feeling. Meanwhile the small one was quite quiet. He always becomes quiet when I work on my own stuff. Now he moved his knee and pushed a bit with his foot. I felt it disagreeable and he quickly turned to another position which I feel more agreeable. I am concerned with the baby because my birth-memories are very bad. What will he pass through then? My memory of living inside the uterus is fine but the birth memories are very bad. He is such a smiling young being. Rather he tries to encourage me. He quietens me. I wonder if after birth we will have such an intimate relation. It is wonderful that he can receive love as well as give love. It is not just me to care for him, he cares for me, too.

Comment: In another bonding analysis the baby nevermore touched the part of the uterus where he once had caused pain. Here the baby was in a position which his mother disliked. Getting her signal he changed his position. From every mother-child bonding

analysis we learned as well that the baby sometimes calms his mother. And another basic experience of the mothers is that their babies understand them better as they understand them. The child explicitly feels the affects of his mother and mirrors them to her and thus helps her to recognize her own affective states and those of the baby better. By that circles of corrections arise and the equivalence becomes finer tuned and more differentiated. Why does the child understand his mother better at first? A hypothesis to answer: The maternal self is too much loaden with representations which can distort the working on the experiences while the self of the child has rather few representations and thus a less distorted feeling.

*11th session, 21st October*

N: I feel something around me everywhere and pushing me. I had a feeling of a tunnel. That was very bad. Now it becomes a bit better.

I: Your birth has been difficult.

N: The most difficult is that I can only bring the body sensations into words. It is strange, there are inner sensations, too, but I cannot grip them. As if much happened at the same time. The baby is a bit disturbed, too. Maybe the chaos happened because I was not born in the time I wanted. I was not prepared, nothing happened due to my rhythm. – So soft and slight is the baby now. Many months ago I felt him that slight.

I: That's interesting. You feel the baby slight after you freed yourself from a heavy burden.

N: When I work on my own stuff he does not move. Then I feel my belly as flat and my uterus as void. If it is over he gives a signal. Now he is very aetheric, very fine. It is such a good feeling. I feel quite calm and peaceful and I imagine it comes from him. (A little later) I never felt like this: The whole room turns around with me. I turn around. At first up and down, then a horizontal movement. Now I remember: A car. Is it possible that the car shook? It was so bumpy finally. Maybe, when they took me home by car. Yes, I'm sure it was a car.

I: Is it further bumpy?

N: Yes, it started again. And since childhood I felt bad in cars. Comment: Nóra's perinatal history can be reconstructed better. But it is more important to know that after working through her birth experiences Nóra felt the baby to be aetheric and fine. After reliving her own experiences the baby was discharged. And Nóra can discern his feelings better now. The contrast is more visible. We can assume that the mother-child bonding actualizes the mother-child experiences of the mother herself which work in latency. If they are not articulated the child cannot but experience them as his own. From our experiences we would argue to actualize the mother's own early experiences. The advantages: The mother mentalizes part of them and becomes more ripe and differentiated; the experiences of her own birth do not burden the birth of the child. The child learns from her experiences to differentiate between his own and her experiences.

*12th session, 18th October (a part from the middle)*

N: I feel a pain on the left side of the uterus. A strange burning pain.

I: What might be the cause?

N: Possibly not my birth but the abortus. It pricked me while talking. Now I feel a continuous burning. And my poor child will move from there upward.

I: Do I understand well that it hurted your uterus when they took the child from it?

N: I suppose so. He probably had implanted there. Since then he hid there. – Now the pain stopped and the baby returned there. I suppose he was angry because I saw his brother in him.

We go on to the 16th session.

*16th session, 14th November*

N: I am still a bit afraid of birth. I am not quite sure of my uterus. If it will work together with me as necessary.

I: What are you afraid of? How will your uterus behave?

N: Maybe it wants to keep the baby.

I: Try to make you uterus speak; what does it say?

N: Or possibly I am afraid that it is hurt from the abortus and cannot work well.

I: Do you feel your uterus hurt?

N: Not that. Maybe, because I know that my ovarium does not function well.

I: So you shifted the feeling to your uterus.

N: The baby is on the left side. Possibly, there is something on the right side which is not so well. When we talked about just now I had feelings which I never felt before: I felt suppressed, bad. It was dark but not quite dark. I saw shadows and I suffocated. This is no birth-experience.

I: Give yourself to your uterus, unite with it and speak as your uterus. Let us see what a disturbance you felt.

N: On the right side is a lifeless not too big field.

I: Focus it: What can lame you on your right side?

N: It is rather down there. I suppose, a hurt. I thought the baby was there, my first baby. Until now I felt as if he were on the left side.

I: It is possible that the right part downward is sad about your baby, and that makes the field numb.

N: As if the feeling dissolves and the spot would fade and become smaller and smaller. I feel a contraction again, it hurts again.

I: As if the real work of mourning does only start now.

N: Something strange. I never felt anything what could explain why I had that feeling of mourning on the left side. Like a lightning it came to me that they were twins. (She becomes more restless and starts to cry dramatically during some minutes.) – This security was very numbing, I just felt it for a second. Very painfully. But I have no doubt at all. I never thought about it. Now, as the feeling has passed, I cannot yet realize it. But via feeling I am quite sure. Now it is much better, much easier. The burning is still on the right side but the numbness has gone. The baby went to the right side.

I: He conquers it as it did not belong to him yet.

N. (starts crying again) I had an idea that my uterus is all right then the baby turned to a birth position.

I: A good sign.

N: I remembered how bad it was for him in the beginning. There was nowhere room for him. He had to fight against ghosts everywhere. Maybe that was the reason that I felt so ill in the beginning. Not little illnesses but really grave ones. I understand that he aggressively wanted to have his space, find a space for himself. In the beginning sometimes he kicked with his feet and became wedge-shaped. The left side was freed earlier. He felt better, he became calmer and more understanding towards me.

Comment: The session will have a point after birth.

### *17th session, 21st November*

N: Compared to his calmness during the last three days he moves very much now. Since the last session he has obviously sunken deeper. Something has changed in our relation. For a long time I did not realize what. Until now I felt us as united, now he is already an independent human being.

Comment: Like in all bonding analyses we find the differentiation here again. From a primary feeling of unit the baby becomes a body of his own, a personality of his own. Such a child does not become psychotic because he can become independent from the affective imbalance of his mother. We mentioned one cause for this together with the building up of

a representation: Helped by the mirroring function of the mother the baby becomes able to regulate his own affective states as well.

The same we see in the case study of Nóra, maybe not that explicitly because of many abbreviations in the text. In the beginning the baby was difficult to be perceived and hardly to be followed, he seemed offended or was in another affective state. This affective lability faded later on, the baby could better control it and reacted more and more calculably.

Nóra gave birth to her son Péter at her home on 3rd December. After birth he quietly looked around and regarded his surrounding for a long time. All children born within a bonding analysis do behave so; they test the other person for a long time and only then decide for relating. This is not by chance, their behaviour does not mirror their actual state or the actual state of the mother, it rather shows inner control and stability.

Nóras placenta was examined: On the right downward part the mummified corpse of a child was detected (foetus papiraceus) which was smaller than eight weeks. Via ultrasound he could not be detected. They were monozygote twins, but Péter's brother had died early. The mother-child bonding analysis discovered it but Nóra's psyche put it back in time helpfully to her first pregnancy.

We stand before the gate of vital prevention.

## References

- Bion WR (1977) *Seven Servants*. Jason Aronson, New York
- Blazy H (1997) Az ember, a kultúra és a társadalom prenatális dimenziója. In: Hidas G (ed.) *A megtermékenyítéstől a társadalomig*. Dinasztia Kiadó, Budapest, pp 151–159
- Fedor-Freybergh PF (1996) *Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine: The New Interdisciplinary Science and Practise in the Changing World*. Előadás: elhangzott az ISPPM budapesti kongresszusán
- Fónagy P, Target M (1996) Playing with reality: the development of psychic reality from a theoretical perspective. *Int. J of Psychoanalysis* 77: 459–480
- Fónagy P (1997) A reménytelen eset: határesetek analitikus kezelésének céljai. Kézirat
- Gergely G (1995) Szimbiotikus folyamatok a korai lelki fejlődésben: Mahler szimbiózis fogalmának újraértékelése. In: Lukacs (ed.) *Korai személyiségfejlődés és terápiás folyamat*. Animula, Budapest, pp 19–28
- Janus L (1997) *Wie die Seele entsteht*. Mattes, Heidelberg
- Meistermann-Seeger E (1991) *Wodurch kommt es zur Abtreibung? Diagnose einer biologischen Krise (Unveröffentlichter Vortrag)*
- Raffai J (1995) The prenatal roots of schizophrenia. *Psychodynamic counseling* 2: 407–411
- Raffai J (1996) Der intrauterine Mutterrepräsentant. *Int J of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine* 8(3): 357–365
- Raffai J (1997) *Mother-Child Bonding-Analysis in the Prenatal Realm*. *Int J of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine* 9(4): 457–466
- Sallenbach WB (1993) The intelligent prenaté: paradigms in prenatal learning and bonding. In: Blum T (ed.) *Prenatal Perception, Learning and Bonding*. Leonardo Publishers, Berlin, Hong Kong, Seattle, pp 61–106