

**MASTER THESIS  
ART AND SCIENCE**

***The Anamnesis network – picture book***

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In March 2018, I started the project called Street Anamnesis. In this mind-wandering period I felt very lost with my life decisions and there was a lot of fear that came from a concern about how to survive, which decision to take about my future and how to accept and deal with the present. I was planning the study project at the *Art and Science* department and I felt pressure, because I wanted to find a topic that was really connected with myself, my most inner thoughts, preferably subconscious thoughts. In general, I had wanted to get some answers about who am I and what I should do in the future, or even better, how I could find the way to start working and motivating myself, because the fear of failure was stopping most of my activities.

I asked myself, how to get subconscious thoughts out of me, if only with thinking I am already planning, putting dust on it and running from myself? I came to the idea that I could do it with some experimental, spontaneous act – planned, but still unpredictable enough. The act that could, with results, give me information about my subconscious mind and consequently bring me closer to myself.

There was a course offered at the University that I missed, called the Anamnesis. While I regret not being able to attend this course, I came to an idea to do Anamnesis on the street by myself, as a “street psychologist”. Working inside of the institution (university) would give me safety, but on the other hand it was also making me anxious, because of too much information and too many suggestions about which direction to dig for information.

Outside the institution I could also not say if I would be able to oversee the freedom, because I would feel too lonely and incapable of doing anything alone, being caught with anxiety and poor knowledge. My concern was that I am not informed, skilled enough to do some project, connected to psychology just by myself alone.

Anyway, in the middle of this tunnel of mind-struggling, the thoughts finally led me outside - into the street - to challenge myself and be with my thoughts outside. It was not that much of a rational decision being made, but just following intuition for the sake of helping myself to escape out of crises with anxiety. I believed that intuition with some reason would lead me to find the right way to go on.

I decided to go into the street and make a connection with people, and ask strangers by the road at the Kanal in Vienna if they would participate in my Anamnesis project. I wanted to catch some moments that could not be predicted in a way - who I would meet, what they would say, what would happen. I wanted to turn off my thinking and just step into action, to empty my mind and stop the distress and anxiety.

The process of conducting anamnesis gave me a feeling of getting a quick but true insight of strangers' lives and feelings in that moment. Besides that, I let myself to be dedicated fully in the moment by absorbing a moment of another person, who is appearing to be very honest in the situation due to the experimental technique of anamnesis, which I created during the process. This dedication, not occupied with overthinking, would connect me to myself in a way that I would not try to catch the moment, worry about the future or feel guilty about the past – but just be in the present moment and listen to the person in front of me, during the making of the anamnesis experiment.

## **2 THE TECNIQUE OF *STREET ANAMNESIS***

I found that my clearest and most honest thoughts come out of my mind when I am fully busy, both physically and mentally, at the same time. Also, when a thousand things are happening around me and I am aware of them, but I am in this moment focusing on a certain point. I realised this when I was writing my first master thesis for Painting studies in Ljubljana. I was waiting for two years to finish it, because I could not concentrate, neither in a library or in other peaceful places.

One day I took the opposite approach, but only by coincidence, and I started to write my thesis in the kitchen crowded with people or where there were some friends or neighbours around me. This noise and happening around me suddenly affected me in the opposite way that I would have expected. It made me productive and fast, and I suddenly finished my thesis in only two months.

I think this experience somehow came subconsciously to my mind again when I started the Street anamnesis experiment.

It was a risky act for me to go into the street and just approach people without knowing the possible reaction. When I first came to the street with intention of starting this action, I became paralysed. It was easier to think how to do it, then to actually start it. I found out that I have an inner struggle and fear of making a connection with people. I had been struggling for one week without doing it, and then one day I just encouraged myself and went to the Kanal. I was thinking about what this process of doing Street anamnesis would look like at the end and what my real reason was for doing it. I just somehow knew that I had to start it, believing that my intuition would lead me to the answers through this process.

At that time I was also planning to visit a psychologist due to my struggles with anxiety and mild panic attacks, which I had already been having for a while. I already knew from past visits to doctors and psychologists that the Anamnesis technique made me freeze. I knew I had to get some help because the fears were increasing, but I just couldn't take the step to actually do it. I also didn't believe that it could help me, because with all usual questions in traditional anamnesis, I realised that the therapy couldn't help me if I didn't trust it.

While thinking about this, I decided to prepare just one question for my “street patients”, which was “how are you?” I remembered a conversation I once had with one of my former professors in Ljubljana, who told me about a theory of her husband, a film director. He said that one of most ridiculous and boring situations that can happen in film is when two characters are standing and one asks the other “So, how are you?”, and the other starts to answer something random like “It’s nice weather these days.”

I thought the same for my anamneses – it is very random, considering that it is the only question that is prepared in this questionnaire. But somehow I thought it could initiate a very honest discussion between me and my interviewee, because they could answer whatever they wanted, and what they really think, without putting too much thought into it. But this randomness could lead us into a very specific conversation, without me wanting to discover something and also without scaring the interviewee with a belief that I wanted something in a hidden way. During this process it felt like there was a certain type of cooperation between me and the “patient”, which was based on trust – a trust that arose naturally because of the technique of the action itself.

At this point, when a connection between myself and the “patient” had begun to develop, I think it was the moment when I first felt the sense of making an “anamnesis” experiment. It was the first confirmation that my intuition was leading me towards the answer of why this experiment was then, in that moment, a way to get back to myself and my innermost thoughts. I will explain this with an example of an experiment by Carl Gustav Jung, which he conducted in 1912. He used this experiment to overcome some personal struggles at some point in his life.

As I was struggling with questions - What should I do with my life? Who am I actually? What is my right way in life? - I intuitively started to find the way to get back to myself, to clear my thoughts and find the right answers for my future decisions.

I started reading Jung’s *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* and found an interesting correlation with his “battle with unconscious” (an essay in the book). In this essay, Jung explains that he became uncertain and disoriented after one of the biggest turning points in life. That was, when he separated from Freud with his theories. He

didn't have his own statement yet, but he decided to start a new approach with his patients. He decided to listen to his patients without any assumptions, and wait to hear what they would tell on their own, by coincidence. Soon he realized that they started to explain about their dreams and fantasies automatically. His follow up questions were things like "What did you think about after that?", "How do you understand this?", "Where does it come from?"

He wanted to leave his theoretical statements and help the patients to understand and recognize the images from their dreams by themselves. He was impressed with his own dreams and studying the meaning of them, but this could still not help him to get away from the feeling of disorientation. On the contrary, he was living under inner pressure. He made an overview of his entire life, studying memories from childhood. The retrospection didn't give him an answer, so he decided to work simply by feeling. Consciously he abandoned himself to unconsciousness, which I think I did with stepping into experiment of "anamnesis". For Jung, the first memory that followed was from his childhood, at the age of ten. At this time, he had liked to play with small cubes. He liked to build houses and castles with them. While remembering this, he had a special feeling, he said: "Here is life!" He understood that the little boy inside him was creative, but could he find him again? He thought that it's almost impossible for an old man to find a connection with ten year old boy. To try and achieve this, he started to play as if he were again ten years old. He started to collect little stones and build houses, castles and little villages. He was playing every day after lunch until his patients arrived. Sometimes he continued in the evenings. While playing, his thoughts got clearer and the fantasies that before he had just felt, he started to understand. He began to think about the real reason behind his playing, and asked himself: "What am I actually doing? You are building a small village and you are doing it as a ritual!" He was convinced that he was on the way to his own myth. The building was only the start - it cleared out the fantasies that he was writing about in later times. Every time he would get to a dead end in his life, he would start to paint or to build with stones.<sup>1</sup>

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Carl Gustav Jung and Aniela Jaffé: Memories, dreams, reflections, (Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken), 1963, pages 187-188

## 2.1 THE PROCESS: EXAMPLES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The first Anamnesis experiment was conducted in Vienna in May 2018.

The interviewee is a woman, 36 years old.

**How are you?**

*I am fine, tired. I had a test today.*

**What did you do today?**

*Played with my child.*

**What do you study?**

*Textile studies.*

*(Woman asks) And who are you?*

**I am a painter, I came to Vienna to study here.**

**What food do you like?**

*Thai food and vegetarian.*

**When do you feel yourself most happy?**

*When I am playing with my child.*

**Do you like jokes?**

*I love jokes from my husband.*

**Do you like the mountains?**

*Yes, very much and I like walking in mountains.*

**Do you have some strange fear?**

*Yes, sometimes I have a fear that somebody is coming and will rape me or do something bad and come to my flat.*

**Which colour do you see now, when you imagine that fear?**

*Red, like blood.*

**Which type of house do you like?**

*Flats from Viennese classicism. Now I live in a building from 50s.*

**Do you like swimming?**

*Yes. It's my favourite sport!*



**In the sea?**

*No, in the pool. For me, it is much more difficult to swim in the sea.*

**Which animal do you prefer?**

*I don't prefer any.*

**Where do you want to go?**

*I want to stay where I am. In Vienna.*

**How was your life, when you were 17 years old?**

*I was very depressive from the age of 15 to 18. I went to a psychologist. I was at gymnasium.*

**Did you go to the seaside in that period? No.**

**Why not?**

*I don't know. We didn't have time.*

**Do you like spicy food? Yes, very much. And you?**

**Me too.**

**How old are you? I am 36.**

**Do you like bridges?**

*I don't know, if I like them or not.*

**Can you imagine standing still on the bridge, while people are passing? How would you feel?**

*I would feel unsure. I have to go now.*

This was the first anamnesis that I did with an unknown person. I went to the class for Experimental praxis, where I met the professor for the first time. I explained to her my idea - doing an anamnesis experiment on the street. She immediately sent me to take the first step right there in the class with the other student. The student was a 36 year-old woman, married and the mother of a small child. She was ready to be my first anamnesis "patient". I started the conversation with the question "How are you?" I was surprised about her answers, because for many of them mine would be quite similar. I realized that I am searching for answers, which could speak about my unrealized wishes, fears and some memories that come from childhood. I always wanted to be near the seaside, but my parents could not afford to go so often. I found out the same in the conversation with this woman. She also likes mountains and likes to walk, she had depression in high school.

When she told me about the fear of violence, that could be done to her by some stranger, like rape, I got a bit afraid. The answers before were somehow so close to me, I could very much drown myself in her talk – as it would be me who is speaking, who is living her life. After the conversation I was rethinking my feelings and memories, trying to understand why I got scared of her fear: “Do you have some strange fear? - Yes, sometimes I have a fear, that somebody is coming and will rape me or do something bad and come to my flat.” Most of my life I didn't have any special fears. I was not afraid of people, especially as a child I felt quite confident, because I had a strong belief that some force - which could be called God - was protecting me. After thinking about her answer I realised that I had become most scared in the last four years, since I was living alone in Vienna. I also remembered some moments in the metro and on the street, when I suddenly thought that somebody wants to catch me, so I started to run to save myself. I forgot about those incidents after they had happened and did not think about them later. When they happened, my mind was in a similar state as if I were sleeping, as if you are dreaming something and in the morning you can't really remember what was happening. Now I unconsciously recalled those happenings by hearing and thinking about this woman's answer.

I felt that the woman was confused, after I asked her if she liked bridges. It looked like she felt uncomfortable and a bit nervous. At this point she also had the body language that was saying that she needed to leave. At this point she got the most nervous, but before that part of the conversation she was quite relaxed. The conversation lasted about 20 minutes. It ended because she had to go, she had to leave the class. I don't know where she had to go. It's possible that she also got nervous because we were running out of time. It is interesting that she got nervous on the question asking about her feelings of staying in one place, while others are passing (like on a bridge), and at the same time she was already in the hurry. I think that at the time of this question, or a minute later, she actually realized that she had to leave class because of other obligations.

The interviewed woman later asked me for results, so I sent them to her by mail. She wanted to read her answers and the whole the conversation, to understand herself, she said. In later anamneses, especially with strangers, interviewees didn't ask me for results, but they mostly wanted to know what was I doing with this project. The woman from the first anamnesis experiment said that she was amazed by the way of questioning and also her own answers.

The symbol of the bridge affected me the most in this anamnesis, and it is repeated in many later anamnesis experiments as well. As it seems this symbol has an important meaning for me, I searched for an explanation of it:

"The bridge is inherently symbolic of communication and union, whether it be between heaven and earth or two distinct realms. For that reason it can be seen as the connection between God and Man. It may be the passage to reality, or merely a symbol for travel and crossing. In dreams, a bridge symbolizes the passage from one state to another, higher one, like an ascension; it is the end of one cycle and the beginning of another. In many cultures it is the link between what can be perceived and what is beyond perception, or at least a change or desire for change. Can be a test to see who is brave (who will cross)."<sup>2</sup> After a year and a half, I can now understand that during that first anamnesis I was trying to figure out my own unconscious mind through questioning and knowing others. I tried to know myself through other peoples' thoughts. Conscious and unconscious. I can say that my questions are sometimes the product of consciousness and sometimes unconsciousness. Especially when I fell into the flow of asking, I think the questions were more out of unconsciousness. The same was true with the interviewed person. They were very much aware of some of the answers (as they carefully watched what they would say), but then others came from their unconscious thoughts. For example – "I have to go". I believe that this answer came from the woman's unconsciousness when she started to feel uncomfortable. No matter if she really had to leave soon anyway. Because she said it in such a way that she sounded like she would like to save herself from the situation, from the question that bothered her. It seemed to me like she was really standing on some bridge in the moment and got scared.

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<http://umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/B/bridge.html>,  
9.11.2019

I identified myself in this situation, because I usually have a problem with staying calm when I get sensitive in an uncomfortable situation. Usually, when I get an inner pressure, I would just say that I have to go somewhere, even if I don't have to. Here I got a reflection of my complex, that when I come under pressure I try to escape from myself and the situation. Or quite the opposite – I force myself to stay under pressure, because I am afraid to step outside. Stepping outside of the pressure would mostly mean not being good enough, giving up, being weak. These are feelings that sometimes don't let me out of an uncomfortable situation. I usually feel confused without knowing - is it a moment where it's natural to fight, or to step out - and this takes a lot of energy, because it mostly stays with the internal negotiation, rather than a quick decision.

The explanation of “the bridge” as a symbol reminds me that I had a strong belief in God when I was a child. I felt very strong because I believed that somebody was always standing behind me, like a kind of an energy or great spirit. I consciously left this connection to my belief when I was fifteen years old. That was at the time when I was leaving primary school, and also the Christian school. I did not want to be connected to God in a Catholic way, because I was angry at the institution of Catholicism. Probably I knew that my belief and God had nothing to do with the institution, but nonetheless I think I also left this belief, and a companion who had always been with me until this moment. After this decision I was feeling less and less safe and confident in myself, in the sense that I could make it on my own. There was always the wish for escape out of the present – mostly to future plans. This would not give me calmness. The symbol of “the bridge” often appears in my questions, maybe because of my searching for a lost “companion”, who was taking care of me in childhood.

## **Anamnesis 2.11.2019**

One of the latest anamnesis experiments that I did took place on 2 November 2019 in Belgrade. The approach that I used in this one was different from the very first anamnesis. It starts with the same question, "How are you?", and the questions were also not prepared, but I already knew that I would want to find out about dreams, memories, childhood and fantasy places where one could stay forever. I wanted to use these topics in an illustrated network of anamnesis – the practical part of my master thesis. I believe that these topics connect people more with situations that have happened to them. The conversation took place in a cafe, and this time the interviewed person was not a stranger, but someone that I had known for some years.

### **How are you?**

*Excellent.*

### **Why?**

*Why?*

**Yes.**

*Because I sit with my friend and that is making me happy, it's enough to be happy. It's late autumn but warm.*

### **Do you like coffee?**

*Yes.*

### **How many times per day do you drink it?**

*One or two times.*

### **When?**

*Around 11 o'clock and around 5 in the afternoon.*

### **Have you been on some bridge lately?**

*Yes.*

### **Where?**

*In Niš.*

### **What did you do there?**

*I was waiting for a friend.*

### **What was there around you?**

*The river, crowds of people, some angry dogs.*

### **Are you afraid of dogs?**

*Usually not, but when they become angry it is not nice.*

### **What were your earliest dreams?**

*I remember dreams after some situations: I remember when I was 5 I dreamt that I was in the toilet and then I wet the bed.*

### **What do you remember from early age?**

*I remember things since I was 4 years old for sure, maybe even earlier. It was 1994, we were sitting in the kitchen at my grandparents' house. There was a shortage of electricity. My aunt came from the town and she brought a small paper box. My aunt had a curly hair. She brought the box to me and to my sister. We opened the box and inside of it was a green parrot, his name was "Đoko". We had him 2 years.*

### **What happened to him?**

*We took care of him for 2 years. In the meantime we got more parrots, so he would not be alone. And the second memory was weird.*

*I heard the sound of the gate. I went outside the house and asked "Who is there?". It was a friend of my aunt and she said to me: "Ded Moroz"<sup>3</sup>*

*It was dark. After that I saw the light in the sky, it was an apparition. I first thought it was Snow White. Suddenly I realized that the apparition was Saint Paraskeva of the Balkans.*

### **Who is that?**

*The patron saint of women.*

### **So, you saw the apparition of her in the sky? Did the friend of your aunt see it?**

*She didn't and I also didn't say that to anybody then.*

### **Were you scared?**

*Yes, because it was dark. And because I heard the voice of my aunt's friend from the dark saying "it's Ded Moroz (Santa Claus)"*

### **Did you have some specific fear in your childhood?**

*I was afraid of pigs, of standing close to them, and of donkeys.*

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Ded Moroz, or Granfather Frost, is a fictional character similar to American Santa Claus and has its roots in Slavic paganism mythology.

<https://russiapedia.rt.com/of-russian-origin/ded-moroz/>, 11.11.2019

## **Why?**

*Because they are animals, they are not under control, they can hunt you and eat you.*

## **Is there some animal, that you can identify with?**

*People usually remind me of some animals, humans have many natures. I can relate to the doberman and beagle.*

## **Can you describe nature, as you can imagine it now?**

*Trees, a bench, the sun.*

## **How does it smell?**

*Yes, I can feel the smell of leaves, dry leaves that decay.*

## **What is your favourite memory?**

*When I finished some obligation. For example - some hard exams. History of art. When I applied with my theme for a PhD. And some nice moments with my ex-boyfriends.*

## **Are you happy about the future?**

*Yes.*

## **Why?**

*Depends how you think. You can imagine nice moments, a house, a yard, but there are also those that don't make us happy.*

## **For example?**

*Everything that is hard. Birth, for example. Things that are physically hard. Not having your own life, sacrificing for a husband.*

## **What is your eternal fantastic place?**

*Somewhere on a mountain, in a forest, a yard with high trees, a tall house with lots of high windows. But only if I would have enough money.*

## **But it is a fantasy, you don't need money.**

*Everything is real, you can also live on Mars today.*

## **Do you swim in rivers?**

*I haven't for a long time.*

## **The last time you did?**

*I just soaked my feet in the river Una in Bosnia.*

## **But where did you swim?**

*The lake counts?*

**Yes.**

*Kasinsko lake, in the south of Serbia.*

**How long did you stay in the water?**

*I was young, it is cold water, you can't stay long, maybe half an hour you can. It is very cold.*

**This is on a mountain?**

**Yes.**

**Can you remember some stranger, the face of the stranger?**

**Yes.**

**Can you describe him?**

*I will describe an old man to you, he is around 70 years old. He is not fat, he is not thin. He wears a hat made of diamonds, but the other clothes he wears are not special. He's always alone, alone on holidays, without a mobile.*

**How do you know he does not have a mobile?**

*I heard.*

*And then, one little woman from my hometown. I have gone to exhibition openings for 20 years and I meet her at every exhibition. She is not an artist, she just loves art.*

**Is she a homeless?**

**No.**

**Did you talk to her?**

*No. But last Friday there was an exhibition and I saw her again. I got the price on this exhibition. I wanted to approach her and ask, what does she do in her life. And so I let her know, that I have known her for a long time, by seeing her at exhibitions.*

The anamnesis with my friend was interesting, because I could compare the things she said and facts that I know about her. The anamnesis shows that women have a big role for her. She mentioned her aunt, as someone who was nice to her and who was her first ideal of beauty (she mentions the curly hair very spontaneously during the conversation). Then there was the friend of her aunt, who scared her. It seems that the female figure is someone strong and she respects a lot, and she wants to and can identify with. After she was scared by her aunt's friend, she saw an apparition in the sky, and she believed it was St. Petka.



St. Petka is a highly respected and famous saint among the Serbs, who is considered the patron saint of women, as well as the guardian of the poor and sick. Believers turn to her for help through prayer, especially today, seeking salvation from illness and other troubles of life. According to folk customs, on St. Petka's day women should not wash, cook, sew, do laundry or any household chores. Young girls need to pick flowers and decorate their home to keep them in harmony and peace all year long. They should put on new dresses, because this brings them luck for the following year. Girls are also supposed to eat a slice of glory cake and preserve crumbs, so that night they will see their fate and future husband in their sleep.

In Serbia's capital city of Belgrade it is customary to go to the Holy Rosary Church on Kalemegdan on Holy Friday – the day of St. Petka, where miraculous water is believed to be taken near the Chapel of Holy Friday, which can cure many ailments, and in particular vision problems. Born in the city of Epivat, near Kalitrakia, Asia Minor at the end of the 10th century, St. Petka came from a wealthy and pious family, and according to some sources, she was Serbian. After the death of her parents, she lived at St. Sophia's Church in Constantinople, after which she spent years in the wilderness in fasting, prayer and a solitary life. According to legend, an angel appeared to her in her sleep and directed her to the Fatherland to spread the faith of Christ. Her relics were transferred many times, and at the request of Princess Milica, they also rested in Belgrade. Today, St. Peter's Chapel contains only her little finger.<sup>4</sup>

The anamnesis with my friend starts with her mentioning a present - sitting with me on the sun and our talk, her gratefulness for it. When I ask her about her earliest memories, she mentions a similar situation from her childhood - sitting with her family in the kitchen, but in the dark. This is a “dark” but still warm situation - the family is together and her aunt comes and makes the children happy with her presents.

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<https://www.telegraf.rs/vesti/srbija/2906869-danas-je-sveta-petka-veliki-praznik-i-crveno-slovo-jednu-stvar-ni-slucajno-nemojte-da-radite-a-to-nije-sve-foto>, 7.11.2019

The most interesting moment I recognized is when my friend mentioned that she first thought the apparition in the sky was Snow White.

Grimm's *Snow White* begins with the mother of Snow White pricking her finger and three drops of blood falling on the snow. This foreshadows the problems that the story wants to explore and solve: sexual innocence, the colour white is positioned in contrast to sexuality, which is symbolically illustrated by drops of blood. In first sentences of *Snow White* children get to know about bleeding – three drops of blood (the number three is very much connected with sexuality in the unconsciousness) – which is the condition for conceiving a baby, because after bleeding the baby is born. The story tells that the mother of Snow White died when she was born. She then got a stepmother in her life, who became mean when Snow White turned seven years old. This is when the stepmother begins to feel that Snow White endangers her with her beauty. The narcissism of the stepmother is already seen when she asks the mirror for confirmation that is she is the most beautiful.

In general, narcissistic mothers and fathers feel endangered when their child is growing up, because it means that they have to get old alone. When the child is dependent on the parents, he/she can not endanger them. Snow White's story warns of the danger of a child's narcissism and the narcissism of a child's parents. Snow White almost loses her life by letting her stepmother change her clothes twice, and the stepmother actually destroyed herself by narcissism. The competition between children and parents can be hard for both sides. Parents should not try to convince their children that they are better, if they want to have a positive influence on the children's abilities. In these kind of circumstances, a child wants to free themselves and get rid of a parent who wants to compete with them. The wish to get rid of their parent makes the child feel guilty. So there is a reversal, which eliminates the guiltiness and that wish is projected onto the mother and father. That's why in fairy tales the parents are the ones who would like to get rid of their child.<sup>5</sup>

In any event, I was amazed about how my friend first thought that she saw Snow White, which projects the childhood battle with Oedipal jealousy between parents and children, and then she recognized a saint who protects women.

I imagined how I would illustrate the moment after my friend experienced the apparition: Her standing at the start of her childhood already at a crossroad, choosing left or right: “Do I want to think about competing or selfless help and love”.

## **2.2 THE USE OF DRAWING DURING THE PROCESS OF MAKING ANAMNESIS**

During the interviews I write all the questions and answers on A3 white paper. I can not remember exactly why I wanted to write everything down at the start – I don't think I consciously foresaw the positive effect it would have on the interviewee and on myself as the interviewer (to ask questions more spontaneously and more connected to my subconsciousness).

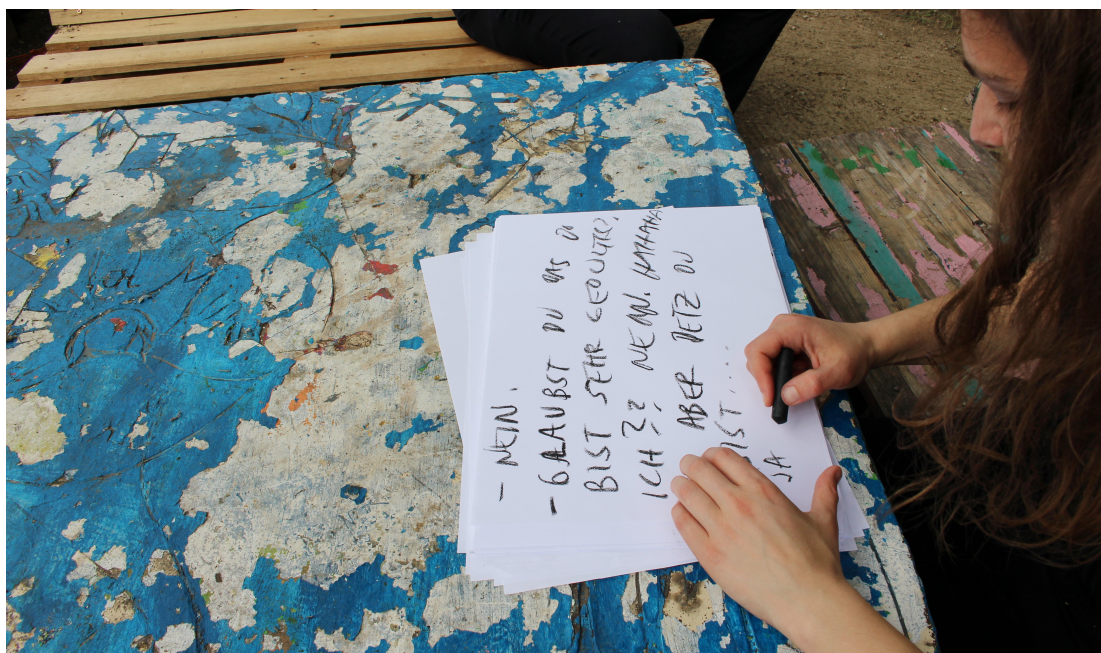
It is more the interviewee who directs the conversation in a way, after I ask the first question. The “silent” time left between me trying to write everything down and them waiting for me, while they have already answered, many times opened the deeper thoughts of the interviewee and gave deeper insight of their feelings. In this moment the person told more than they would have expected to say. Probably because of having a safe space to say it, and having some type of control over me, while I was writing down the text and not thinking about what they were actually saying.

I remember an example from another anamnesis experiment that I did on the street, by the river in the centre of Vienna: The man was around thirty-five years old. As always, I started with the question – how are you? The following questions were mostly about his home – what colours does he see every day, where does he wants to go, what is he missing, does he visit his parents often, etc. When we reached the question about his parents, I asked, what their house looks like and if there is a lot of mail left for him when he returns home. I asked that because it's an association I have with my home – when I go back to my parents', there is always mail for me and

I get angry, because my father always opens it. I guess I wanted to ask the man if his parent open his mail. He told me that there is not a lot of mail left for him when he returns. After that, I asked him if there is some kind of fence around the house. I was surprised by his reaction, which was a bit defensive. He said: "Yes, but only because of the dog!" After that I was thinking about my parents' house, which doesn't have a fence, but does have a small wall in front of it. I thought that fences and walls have an important role, to protect our homes. They can protect a dog, but a dog is also protecting us and our home. I realized that humans need a lot of things to feel secure and there is never enough. I got to the point where the fear itself is making me insecure, because it makes me build more and more fences around my thoughts. This does not let me see things clearly and as they really are.

I think that my intention to "work" physically during the process was just to relax my mind from the inner pressure. But I don't think there was a pressure from the experiment I was doing, I think this was a secondary pressure. I wanted to release my pain from the pressure of not knowing which way to choose in my life. I wanted to reach a place where I did not to think about the future anymore, because it was destabilizing me, so I wanted to take control over it. I intuitively came to the point of focusing on the moment I am in. And when I asked the people about their thoughts, I could really be in the moment, if I were a hundred percent occupied by it. At the start I only predicted this, but it was confirmed on the first try, with the first Anamnesis that I made, interviewing the Viennese woman. The transcribing of the whole conversation takes more time then the speaking flows, so I would have to hurry to catch everything and even to ask the interviewee again about their answer, if I missed something because it was rushed. I was completely in the moment in this time and this offered a feeling of release and self-healing in a way. My thoughts were not so focused on what would I ask to keep the conversation in flow without pauses. This caused my questions to be connected to the end of every answer the person gave, meaning that the next question was actually suggested by the person's own answer. It sometimes happened that the answer would be unclear, so I could not use this principle.

In that case my mind switched to some past answer, which was decided by logic. Something that the person had already answered – close to the theme before, but I could somehow pull it out of nowhere in this moment of confusion. Because someone was providing something unsaid and I would find its place and explanation in those kind of moments. This was a mental switching that I mostly just did by myself without letting the person know, which would make the whole conversation more connected and significant.



Street Anamnesis, 2018, photography by Guadalupe Alderte

The result was that the answer the person gave me for the third question might not have such an important role. But at the seventh question (for example), where I went deeper into the third question (even though they could not know that because there were some other questions in between), a really interesting message could come out which gave a greater sense or meaning to the whole result. I noticed a lot of times that the interviewee would be surprised at the end, surprised by their own answers and thoughts ("Yes, but only because of the dog!"- I noticed that the person was surprised about his thought, he was looking uncomfortable after), given to questions that first sound unimportant and strange, but can lead to noticeable insights.

Months after the first 15 Anamneses I made on the street, I watched an interview with Robert Bresson, in which he explains his technique for working with actors. He mentions the mechanical behaviour, which means that our gestures and words are automatic. "If your hands are on your knee, you didn't put it there," quoting Montaigne's hypothesis that our hands go where we do not tell them to go. Bresson states that our hands and words are autonomous, they are not under our command. We don't think about what we are going to say, the words come even as we think, and perhaps even make us think. This is what he wants to show with the automatic performance of his actors. From this point of view, theatre is unrealistic and unnatural, he claims. With his films he attempts to touch what's real and reveal his awareness of obsession with reality. "It's a strange combination of they and me, a transfer of energy between us. It's a kind of mixture, not from direction or staging, but from a kind of divination, a shared assent, a kind of friendship in all matters. It absolutely does not come from directing of actors or staging things." Bresson doesn't consider himself a film director, because there is no stage included. Rather, he calls himself "one who imposes order." His actors' minds are completely uninvolved in the happening. They keep repeating lines, 50 times if necessary, until the mind no longer intervenes in the dialogue or gestures. Once things become automatic, the actor is thrown into the action of the film, and completely unexpected things happen, which are a hundred times more real than theatrical acting, where the actor has memorised the text, thinking out his every gesture and line.<sup>6</sup>

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6 Interview with Robert Bresson, youtube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcOOLfqDcho&t=206s>, 2019

This is something that was bothering me when I first visited the national drama theatre in Ljubljana. The performance of the actors seemed to be very professional and correct, but very unnatural. I could not feel much life, but only emotions that were forced. This feeling was making me anxious, so I lost any interest in going back to this theatre. This was similar to the way I felt when I first visited a psychologist. I felt the anamnesis the psychologist did with me was like a well-trained play, and I did not believe her, or more precisely, I did not believe that she could believe me, believe what I was saying to her. Because of this feeling of doubt I could also not open my thoughts to the most honest level, so she could make the connection with me and help me progress.

### 3 THE NETWORK OF ANAMNESIS AS A PICTURE BOOK

After conducting street anamneses, I got the idea of writing and illustrating the tales, and in this way creating the world I longed for. I remembered the feeling from my childhood, when I was writing from imagination. I felt free and comfortable to write and draw the world and to be honest in making it. I thought that I could somehow connect the experiment of Street Anamnesis with creating tales in picture book form. I started to ask myself, if tales and picture books could be useful in more ways - as an art work, as a therapy, as an educational tool. I foresaw that the book I would make would not be a fairy tale but a picture book - a network of anamnesis, which could be the basis for the future creation of picture books of tales. I found the documents of Street Anamnesis to be a great chance to upgrade the individual experiences (and my visual interpretation of them) into a new form as a picture book.

Thus far I have conducted Anamneses with around 40 people. The common line I could draw after analysing them is the fear of death, concern about weaknesses and searching for stability and security in both the psychological and physical sense.

I believe that I got answers revealing these concerns, because I was asking from my inner-self, due to the technique of the interview. The vast majority of the questions were not prepared, so the first thoughts that came to me in the moment were my deepest thoughts (based on my concerns, memories, fears, dreams, etc.), and they were released through associations I got after each answer from the interviewee. This doesn't mean that the questions were necessarily pointing to those topics, but the conversation did as a whole. Considering this, I can now see the whole network of those anamnesis as a picture of my own unconscious mind. After I became aware of this, I got the idea to do an anamnesis with myself alone, and to also include some scenes from my own anamnesis into the picture book along with the scenes from the other anamneses that I did with people.

The following is an example of a similar experiment I later found while reading Carl Gustav Jung's *Liber Novus*:

"From December 1913 onward, he carried on in the same procedure: deliberately evoking a fantasy in a waking state, and then entering into it as into a drama. These



fantasies may be understood as a type of dramatized thinking in pictorial form. In retrospect, he recalled that his scientific question was to see what took place when he switched off consciousness. The example of dreams indicated the existence of background activity, and he wanted to give this a possibility of emerging, just as one does when taking mescaline." Jung called his experiment 'confrontation with the subconscious.' He did not record day-to-day happenings or outer events, but his active imaginations and depictions of his mental states together with his reflections on these.<sup>7</sup>

From the collected anamneses-experiments I chose about 10 of them. Each one is then elaborated into a storyboard (consisting of pictures of the most significant parts of the anamnesis). The storyboards present the pictures based on the answers told by the interviewees. From those storyboards I take some scenes and combine them into a common picture story in the picture book.

The illustrated scenes show the important moments in the lives of interviewees that have happened to them from the earliest age until now.

"Scenes" from 10 anamneses are then connected into one picture tale. I got the idea by reading Jung's *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, where he describes his own from the earliest age until the death. I was amazed by some memories or thoughts he had as a child and how I could relate my own thoughts from my childhood to Jung's. Some were very similar, and I thought that I could somehow illustrate how the thoughts of the people I interviewed are also connected, or even almost the same in some cases. I started the picture book by illustrating scenes of one person's anamnesis and intuitively I switched to another person after two or three illustrated scenes. Sometimes there is just a single scene from one person's anamnesis. I use the word network because the picture book is one story built out of different people's anamneses. It feels that the picture book is just from one person, but there are about 10 different people inside it.

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### 3.2 ANAMNESIS NETWORK AS A TALE

The questions I used in the last Anamneses are connected with memories of childhood, or the strongest memories one could have from childhood. I was asking about fears they had or still have. They would have to imagine a future imaginary place, which could be an eternal place, if there were no mortality. During the Anamnesis process I started to ask myself about the line between childhood and adulthood. Is there a specific timeline or moment in time that divided the two? And how do different people experience this transformation of their mind into that of an adult. For myself, I can not say I really see the psychological line between one and the other, but I feel that I saw myself more as an adult when I was a child. Now I have the feeling I am still a child, but a grown-up child with many more fears. One of the interviewees said that she has strongly felt herself as an adult since she was 14 years old.

Fairy tales can have a positive effect on a child's subconscious mind, and I believe the same could be true for an adult. I question how or when a person actually stops being a child? How does this happen, and is it even necessary?

During an Anamnesis conducted with 33 year old Viennese woman, I got some insights into this question :

**Were adults something mysterious to you when you were a child? Something unknown?**

*Yes, the behaviour.*

**Were you afraid to grow up?**

*No.*

**When you grew up, do you remember some moments – like “oh, now I grew up (in this moment)”? Like if you would reach the top of the mountain?**

*I don't remember such a moment, it was a continuation. I was very responsible all of my life, I was trying as much as possible while doing chores around the house. At 14 I felt completely responsible for myself.*

**So you think being adult is about responsibility?**

*Yes, that's the only thing I can think of, because what else could it be, because adults have the same feelings as children do, they have the same conflicts as children, but they can develop different awareness, and thoughts of feeling and deal differently with the conflicts.*

**So you think you deal with conflicts differently as an adult?**

*What changes completely is your role in society, you get different rights as an adult. In some way you can decide for yourself.*

**So when you are a child you are a bit stuck in a way?**

*Yes, definitely. You are involved with your parents and you can not escape completely.*

**So now you are more free?**

*Yes.*

**But not completely?**

*Of course not.*

## 4 THE MEANING OF FAIRY TALES/TALES

In his book *The European Folktale*, Max Lüthi explains that the secret of the fairy tale is not in the motifs that are used, but in the way that they are used, meaning in their form. On the other hand, legends and tales are in close connection with what is told. The event, the act, real or unreal becomes a conversation. The subject determines the mood of the speaker, and both the subject and the mood determine the form of the tale. Andre Jollas said that the tale and the legend are "simple forms." The fairy tale is different. Its form doesn't come from the content, but it has its own life. In the legend and so in the tale the real world is strictly divided (spiritually) from the outer world.<sup>8</sup>

Before planning this thesis, my anamnesis-experiments were more connected with tales, if I used them in storyboards. There are some details that could be expanded into fairy tales. But mostly they are just tales, because they are based on things that are real in this world.

The second part of the anamneses could be bases for fairy tale stories, because each anamnesis consists of the fantasy part - my questions focus on the person's imagination about their imaginary-fantasy place that would fulfil them eternally.

In his book, Bettelheim underlines the importance of searching one's sense or meaning of life. The one who really wants to be aware of his existence and not just to live from day to day in his routine can feel the strong need for finding his sense of life. But when a person loses his will to live, this can make him stop searching for it anymore, because this sense starts to disappear from him in those moments. The sense of life is not necessarily reached at certain age, when a person could be mature. On the contrary, knowledge of this sense tells us that we have reached psychological maturity. But nevertheless, this knowledge is the result of the long development of personality, and at every age we shall find some piece of sense that completes our stage of mind and understanding. The most important task in raising a child is to help them find meaning in life. A child needs a lot of experiences to reach

this point, and they get them while growing up. They need to learn to understand themselves. By knowing themselves they also learn to understand other people, and they are then capable of building relationships that can be good for both sides. To reach a deeper meaning in our lives, we have to overcome the selfishness and internalize the belief that we will contribute something important with our existence. This feeling is necessary if we want to be content with ourselves and the work that we do. It's also important to develop our inner wealth, so our thoughts, dreams, imagination and mind support each other. Positive thoughts give us power to develop a healthy mind, and faith in the future can help us find a way out of the trouble that is constantly in our way. In his studies, Bettelheim wrote that children would not need any special help if they were raised having hope in life. The main responsibility of a teacher or therapist is that they return the hope to a child's life. Bettelheim did research on which experiences are most important for children's development of inner-sense, sense of their own existence. The most important roles are played parents, society and cultural heritage. For younger children, the best helper is literature. The majority of children's literature is not appropriate for the development of a child's mind and personality, because it doesn't encourage the growth of those abilities that could overcome difficult inner problems. There is too much literature that only aims to entertain or teach. It is necessary to confront children with their fears through literature.<sup>9</sup>

Bettelheim mentions the following case of a mother and child:

The mother was encouraged by discussing the uses of fairy tales. She was afraid of reading a bit scarier tales to her child, because she believed that this could increase his fears. She already knew that he was fantasizing about giants who eat people. She told him a story about a boy who killed the giant. At the end of the story the boy responded: "But giants don't exist, isn't that true?!" Before she could calm him and confirm his question and destroy the meaning of it, the child suddenly added: "But there are adults, who are similar to giants!" The child, who was at the time 5 years

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old, already understood the encouraging message of this fairy tale: Even if a boy sees an adult as a scary giant, he can overcome them with cunning.<sup>10</sup>

I don't consider the network anamnesis presented as a picture book to be a therapy book or fairy tale, which had been my idea at the start. It's an illustration of my research, which led me to findings that I believe can be used as a good orientation in future creations of tales and picture books for children and adults.

Perhaps, it is just an insight into the subconscious minds of the people I interviewed. I wanted to come nearer to the answer of how to help myself and to be closer to myself and to understand my feelings. This is how I believe I could also work positively and develop my work in a practical and maybe also a therapeutic way.

The final anamneses included some planned questions, which were different from earlier ones. I asked each interviewee about their fantasy place – a place where they could imagine themselves being eternal in time and space. They described the place visually, who they would have with them in this place and the things they would do there. Some people described their feelings, some fears dependent on this place. Most of them choose a place where they would be happy and calm, where they wouldn't miss anything. Some of them emphasised that the place would just be a contemporary escape from reality - even when I reminded them that this is not a place they could actually escape to, but just an imaginary place. One person mentioned that she would stay there forever, if all the dearest people would be with her. Another interviewee said that she would be there alone, in the Amazon rainforest. She chose a concrete place, but she wouldn't stay there forever, because she would like to return to society, where her family and friends live.

Most of the interviewees thought about this question in quite a serious way. I saw that they would really like to choose the right things and people to be with them in this place. At this point, I recognized a lot of puerility, which reminded me of Sigmund Freud's thoughts in his book *Psycho-analysis and Telepathy*. There he mentioned a child, who is free to fantasize during his play and doesn't hide himself, compared with how adults lose this by getting shame, after which they start to hide.

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## 5 CONCLUSION

In my master-project process I wanted to come closer to my subconscious thoughts by collecting them (through experiments) and joining them together with the thoughts of the people I interviewed. I wanted to understand why my fears are accompanying me and how I could use them to motivate myself and use them in a creative way. I was interested if analysing other people's thoughts could help me to find the answers that I am looking for during a time of struggling with life decisions. During the process I got the idea that the anamnesis experiment could become a kind of healing tool, because the people I interviewed were very interested in the result. I started to ask myself, is it good to have the intention of helping others, is this really an honest act, or is just hiding under the weakness? Can a person really help someone else? I think my master work is a path, where I wanted to collect my subconscious thoughts all together, to see where my life leads me. I wanted to collect the symbols of my mind, to illustrate them, to help myself to go on.

I found meaning in helping others, but almost at the same time I realised that the most honest way to do it is to first help myself. And it can not be the other way around. When I was impulsively drawing the illustrations, procrastinating about making fairy tales or tales, which could “cure” others, I thought I should not force the “cure” intention. I would, in that case, just hide behind the work and use the excuse that I wanted to help. Man has to first experience suffering, so he can confront his desires, and the positive and negative effects of them.<sup>11</sup>

After thinking about fairy tales, I realised that I could use the stories of the people that I was interviewing during the anamneses. The Anamnesis network picture book is a nice overview of the short path I have been through and an example of how to put some of the thoughts and experiences into one work. I want to present different lives by illustrations and with the text from the anamnesis in order to show how our lives are connected by the thoughts, dreams, fantasies, events and actions that we experience. On other hand, there is also a picture of me looking for an answer to the question “how to live with myself?” Questioning strangers and friends about their lives, thoughts, dreams and fantasies also made me confront my fears and

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frustrations. Helping myself by being active and feeling myself in the present – that's what I learned from the process. As one of the interviewees answered: “Do you live in present? Can you feel in the present? Or you live more in the future or past? – Yes, I live in present. To be in the present also means being in fine touch with the past and future. I don't think you can be in the present, if there is no future and no past.”

I would like to implement this experience into future picture books that I want to create, and go on with writing tales – in this process I rediscovered my joy in making them. The Anamnesis network is a good base to start from.



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