POSITIVE ILLUSIONS IN LOVE AND THEIR RELATION WITH THE SATISFACTION IN THE RELATIONSHIP

Love is an inexhaustible inspiration to many writers and poets since ancient times. This complex emotion has been sung and praised throughout countless literary works. But experiences of suffering and disappointment have led some to a somewhat more negative view of love. Thus Marie Henri Beyle, better known under the pseudonym Stendhal, describes love as an artifact in his book "About love" (1947; Sternberg and Barnes, 1988). That idea came to look at how a tree branch, fell into a salt mine, crystallized and became a seemingly invaluable object, while in its essence remained a common, unpleasant, worthless granite. He pulled the analogy with the experience of love he called crystallization. Love is the fruit of imagination, projection of your ego-ideal on an object that does not often deserve it. When reality comes to light, crystallization disappears, and with it the love. And in scientific papers, we find a pessimistic look at the idealization of partners in love. Brickman (1987; according to Murray, Holmes and Griffin, 2003) argues that people rationalize their partners' deficiencies by overriding their virtues. Thus (Gottman, 1998; according to Murray et al., 2003) fail to transform, but are simply masked and shadowed by virtues. But such ideals are very unstable and can turn love into hatred when the illusion disappears. Adherents of this view of love warn couples not to idealize each other, but to try really to look at their true characteristics (Brehm, 1988; according to Sternberg and Barnes 1988). This view has also found support in Swanna, Hixon and De La Ronde (1992), who have shown that couples declare a lower level of emotional closeness to marriage if their partner experiences more positive than they see themselves. Hence, permanent satisfaction depends on understanding the partner's true qualities and weaknesses. Kelly et al. (1985, Murray, Holmes, and Griffin, 1996) found that the initially most inanimate couples have reduced the love partner's marriage to the most suggestive and suggest that the benefit of knowing and understanding the partner's real traits comes to the surface only later when the realism protects the
partners from the disappointments. Perhaps the illusion only provides a sense of false security that actually creates the potential for later disruption and stress. It may cause partners to become blind to existing incompatibilities and differences, e.g. in the desired closeness (Christensen and Heavey, 1993; Murray et al., 1996) and thus conceal potential conflicts, but only temporarily. By contrast, people who do not know the partners' true attributes are more secure, they know better the differences in their flaws and needs, making them easier to adapt, preventing later hardship and ensuring long-term satisfaction (Swann, Hixon and De La Ronde, 1994). Swann et al. claim that partners at the beginning of the relationship want the partner to evaluate them positively, but on a long-term perspective, people want partners to see them as they are and to discover and understand their true attributes. Moreover, they find that couples are more committed if their partners see it in accordance with their own self-image, even if it includes confirmation of their negative self-image (Swann et al., 1992).

Although in the preceding section the concept of illusion is described in a negative tone, not all scientists favor the belief that illusion results in negative outcomes. Thus, Taylor and Brown (1988) presented the concept of beneficial positive illusion as a contrast to traditional mental health considerations according to which real perceptions of reality were considered essential for mental health (the ability to care for others, satisfaction, the ability of productive and creative work). Moreover, they claim that such illusions prevail in normal human cognition and are useful for mental health. People create self-confident illusions about themselves, about their environment and future. They described three interlinked illusions: 1) unrealistic positive self-evaluation, 2) overestimation of control and 3) unrealistic optimism. An individual is seen as better than an average person and believes that he has more knowledge and positive qualities than others and overestimates control over the situations in which he plays the most important role. He estimates that he has more chances than his peers to experience positive events, while for the negative he declares the other way around. Taylor and Brown believe that cognitive mechanisms that filter information and distort them in a positive direction are responsible for these image retention strategies. Such beneficial effects of illusion, apparently, are not limited only to mental health, but also to physical health. Thus, Taylor, Kemeny, Reed, Bower, and Gruenewald (2002) have shown that unrealistic optimistic beliefs about the future and the level of control in men infected with HIV are associated with slower progression of the disease. Taylor, Lerner, Sherman, Sage, and McDowell (2003) have shown in laboratory conditions that people who achieve high results on the self-esteem variable have less pronounced cardiovascular reactions to stress, faster recovery of the cardiovascular system, and lower baseline cortical levels. However, these beneficial effects of positive illusion
failed to confirm all the research (Paulhus, 1998). Gramzow, Elliot, Asher, and McGregor (2003) propose the following explanation for the inconsistency of the research results on this topic. They consider that what determines positive or negative consequences is not the level of self-evaluation bias, in itself, the nature of the motivation that this bias originates (self-protection vs. self-esteem). Taylor and Brown (1988) do not limit the concept of positive illusion to self-perception but also extend to the so-called illusion of the rise of others, with the rationale that the perception of the significant others in a positive light helps maintain a positive image of oneself. Thus, a positive marital illusion is found in several different research paradigms. First, spouses show the tendency to evaluate partners more positively than themselves, and in relation to other people, both themselves and partners are more positive (Hall and Taylor, 1976; according to Fowers, Lyons and Montel, 1996). Similarly, Pomerantz (1995, according to Fowers et al., 1996) found that people evaluate themselves and partners with higher grades than other people, but the assessment of self is still the greatest. Secondly, exploring the attribution of responsibility in marriage, it has been found that happy couples for positive events in marriage largely attach credit to the partner than the partner attaches to them, and for negative events they attach themselves to more guilt than the partner attaches them (Fincham et al., 1987, Fincham and Bradbury 1989, according to Fowers et al., 1996). Fincham et al. such an attribute pattern was called a partner-centric bias of attribution. The bias of this type was not found for everyday events. Namely, in happy couples there is no difference in the attribution of responsibility between one another and one partner, but in the case of dissatisfied couples the opposite pattern of attribution found in the tendency of attaching is more guilty to the partner and accordingly it is called egocentric bias at the attribution (Fincham et al., 1987; Fincham and Bradbury, 1987; Fincham and O'Leary, 1983; Holtzworth-Munroe and Jacobson, 1985; Jacobson et al., 1985; Kyle and Falbo, 1985 according to Fowers et al., 1996). Tree, it turned out that most couples tend to overestimate their bravery. For example, even three-quarters of participants in one study (Heaton and Albrecht, 1991, according to Fowers et al., 1996) states that it is very unlikely or almost unlikely that their marriage will end with a divorce that is inconsistent with the divorce rate which is disproportionately larger (US Census Bureau, 1992; Martin and Bumpass, 1989, according to Fowers et al., 1996). Fowers, Lyons, Montel, and Shaked (2001) have checked whether the underestimation of the likelihood of divorce is present only in the consideration of a participant’s own marriage or in the presence of an estimation of other marriages. It turned out that the participants are so optimistic only in assessing the likelihood of a divorce of their own marriage, while considering other marriage estimates, they are very pessimistic.
REFERENCES