

MEETINGS “Ψ AND CULTURE“

In 2016, through the initiative of Prof. Žarko Trebješanin and Prof. S. G. Markovich the Faculty of Political Science agreed to host the first meeting dedicated to psychoanalysis (Ψ) and culture under the title “Contemporary Relevance of Freud’s Thought.” The meeting was prompted by the 160th anniversary of the birth of Sigmund Freud. Concomitantly the University Library in Belgrade organised an exhibition and published a book entitled *Freud and/or Jung*. The book includes the bibliography of works on Freud and Jung in Serbian (Serbo-Croat). It demonstrated that in the previous one hundred years the works of Freud and Jung were carefully studied and held in high esteem in the areas of Serbia and Yugoslavia.

The idea for these meetings was encouraged by the theory of Sigmund Freud. Starting from 1907 he and his disciples began discussing the psychoanalysis of artistic creation. In that way they widened the scope of their interest from individual clinical studies to art and culture as well. In the period between 1912 and 1929 Freud went one step further. He redirected his attention to wider issues such as religion, human aggressiveness, and the purpose of human culture/civilisation. This reached its climax in his work *Civilisation and its Discontents*, originally published in 1929 in German as *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*.

Similar efforts were made by his disciple Géza Róheim, who initiated a periodical publication *Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences*. Five volumes were published within this project from 1947 to 1958. After that Werner Muensterberger continued the project, albeit under a different name – *The Psychoanalytic Study of Society*. The 19 volumes under this title were published from 1960 till 1995.

Within the project “Ψ and Culture” Prof. Ž. Trebješanin and S. G. Markovich originally planned biannual meetings in Belgrade. The first was held in 2016. Prompted by the positive response to the first meeting in 2016, and encouraged by Prof. Ljubomir Erić and Prof. Čedomir Čupić, we agreed to organise another meeting one year later. In line with that, in November 2017, “Ψ and Culture 2” was organised. It was entitled “The thought of Wilhelm Reich and Psychoanalysis and Leader.” The next meeting is planned for June 2019 with the title “Ψ and Culture 3: Psychoanalysis, Aggressiveness and War”, to mark the centenary of the peace treaty following the Great War.

What the initiators have particularly had in mind is to discuss the application of the theory of the unconscious to culture, and to analyse the scope of the unconscious in decision-making, including political decisions. This has been a neglected field of analysis, often opposed to the general theoretical

trends in social sciences. In mainstream analyses human decisions are often rationalised, and their symbolism is neglected. The many times mentioned and discussed phenomenon of rationalisation is simply passed over. In this way mainstream theories frequently fail to see that rationalised decisions and rationalised interpretations of such decisions are in both cases essentially, if not dominantly, determined by the unconscious. It is for this reason that drawing attention to the area of the unconscious is among the main tasks of meetings like this dealing with the relationship of culture and the unconscious, or of psychoanalysis and culture.

This series of meetings was not conceptualised as a contribution to Freudian orthodoxy, but rather as an application of dynamic psychiatry, to use the term of Henry Ellenberger. They are focused on the application of analytical tools and notions of dynamic psychiatry to culture and society, regardless of the theoretical inclinations of their participants. In this sense, although Freud's theory is the starting point of these meetings, other orientations personified by A. Adler, C. G. Jung, W. Reich, or the school of ego-psychology and other dynamic schools, are equally welcome. The meetings are open both to those who have theoretical interests in dynamic psychiatry, but also to those who professionally deal with some related orientations, such as psychiatrists and psychotherapists. Artists, writers and all other professionals who have experienced fruitful encounters with an aspect of dynamic psychiatry are also more than welcome.

In 2016–2017 the language of the meetings was limited to Serbian (Serbo-Croat), and in the geographic sense to the Yugoslphere. In order to organise meetings that would include participants beyond Belgrade and the University of Belgrade, we addressed the Open Society Foundation, which we cordially thank for its support. We are particularly grateful to our colleagues from other faculties and institutions in Belgrade and to colleagues from Ljubljana, Zagreb and Novi Sad who took part in the meeting in 2017. The meeting had 14 participants including: Prof. Gordana Jovanović, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade – UoB, Prof. em. Vukašin Pavlović, Faculty of Political Science – FPS, UoB, Prof. Lino Veljak, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, Asst. Prof. Marjeta Mencin-Čeplak, Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana, Obrad Savić, Faculty of Media and Communications of the University of Singidunum, Vladeta Jerotić, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Prof. Čedomir Čupić, FPS, UoB, Prof. Milanko Govedarica, Faculty of Philosophy, UoB, Dr. Lazar Marićević, Centre for the Development of Serbia, Belgrade, Prof. Ljubomir Erić, Faculty of Medicine, UoB, Prof. Petar Jevremović, Faculty of Philosophy, UoB, Prof. Ratko Božović, FPS, UoB, Prof. Slobodan G. Markovich, FPS, UoB, and the Institute for European Studies, Belgrade, and Milan Popov, MA, Institute for Philosophy and Multidisciplinary Studies, Novi Sad. Since the last meeting in 2017 a very prominent participant of the first two meetings, academician Vladeta Jerotić, passed away (on Sep. 4, 2018). With his work *Psihoanaliza i*

kultura (Psychoanalysis and Culture), but also by applying dynamic interpretations in the analysis of literary and artistic works, he has given an outstanding contribution to the popularisation of psychoanalysis and closely related orientations in Serbia and ex-Yugoslavia.

We are grateful to the company Informatika and to the Institute for European Studies for having joined efforts to publish the first collection of essays. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Institute for European Studies for accepting to be the co-publisher of this thematic collection of essays.

The second meeting was held on the very day of the 60th anniversary of Reich's death, on November 3 and 4, 2017. Prof. Gordana Jovanović was instrumental in conceptualising and organising the first day of the meeting, which was dedicated to the theory of Wilhelm Reich. His theory had a relevant reception during the existence of former Yugoslavia, and it provoked several important polemics. The first day of the meeting in 2017 dedicated to Reich proved that some aspects of these polemics still remain very relevant.

The Centre for Democracy of the Faculty of Political Science and organised the first two meetings “Ψ and Culture”. The phenomenon of leader and of those who are led was the topic of the second day of the meeting “Ψ and Culture 2.” This topic was treated from the point of view of an overlapping of leadership and narcissism, but discussions were focused on the relation between leader and those who are led, on individual cases of leaders, but also on the question if leader is necessary at all. A connection between narcissism and leadership was singled out, and even between pathological narcissism and political leadership. In the discussion that followed the presentation of papers, it was also debated if there is a particular type of political personality and if narcissism is what gives to this type its peculiar dimension.

Meetings of this kind would not be possible if the Faculty of Political Science did not demonstrate an inclination for a multidisciplinary approach to social, political and cultural phenomena. For this reason we are thankful to the Faculty and its dean Prof. Dragan R. Simić for their understanding and support in organising meetings of this kind, and for the dean's address at the beginning of the meeting. Two professors of the Faculty of Political Science in Belgrade have, by their commitment to and their support for a multidisciplinary understanding of *homo politicus* and of human nature, made possible the conceptualisation of these meetings. They are professors Vukasin Pavlović and Čedomir Čupić and I would like to cordially thank them.

Belgrade, September 2018

Slobodan G. Markovich