**History of Psychoanalysis in Serbia**

**Beginnings**

The history of psychoanalytic thinking in Serbia has deep and old roots. The very beginning could be traced to the times before WWI with some continuity preserved till present days in spite of turbulent and tragic history - wars and political changes.

Due to geographic location and cultural influences prominent intellectuals who were educated in Austria and Germany were crucial for establishing psychoanalysis in Serbia in the first decades of 20th century.

One of the first who studied psychoanalysis was Nikola Popovć (1883-1970) philosopher and later university professor, educated in Berlin in 1914. He published first psychoanalytic books and introduced psychoanalysis as a subject at the University of philosophy in Belgrade. Then the short review ’Psychoanalytic Method’ was published in the book Psychology by prof. Borislav Lorenc 1926, and the article ’Thoughts on Psychoanalysis’ by Hugo Klain in 1929. This article was explaining various psychoanalytic concepts in a popular way, making them accessible to wider public. First translations of Freud’s works ’An introduction to Psychoanalysis’ by prof. Lorenc and ’Psychopathology of Everyday Life’ by Hugo Klain were published in 1933. and 1937. Nikola Popović also published ’Lectures on Psychoanalysis’ in 1934 and ’Psychoanalysis- Fundamentals of Sigmund Freud’s Teaching’ in 1935.

The first practicing psychoanalyst in Serbia before WW2 were Nikola Miklos Šugar (1897-1945) and Hugo Klain (1894-1981), both from Jewish Yugoslavian families. Hugo Klain studied medicine in Vienna from 1912 and attended Viktor Tausk’s lectures in 1913. Tausk who for some years lived in Sarajevo and Zagreb (at that time Austro Hungarian Empire), was fluent in Serbo-Croatian language. At the beginning of WW1, he was conscripted into Austro-Hungarian army, and after finishing medical studies returned to his country. Between 1921 and 1923 he studied with Wagner-Jauregg and Emil Kraepelin in Munich, then in Vienna he asked for Freud’s referal to start with training analysis. Freud recommended Edward Hitschmann but Klain decided to approach Paul Schilder. Nikola Šugar complited medical school in Prague in 1923. After that he pursued neuropsychiatry studies in Berlin, where he became interested in psychoanalysis. He underwent two years of analysis with Boehm. After that he went to Vienna for further training and attended Freud’s lectures. He became an associate member of Vienna

Psychoanalytic Society (1933-1938) and of the Budapest Psychoanalytic Society (1938). He returned to Belgrade in 1937. and founded Belgrade Psychoanalytic society in 1938. With eight members. The Society organized scientific meetings, popularized psychoanalytic ideas, engaged in lively translation activities, and educated future analysts. Occasionally they held lectures for a wider audience, primarily attended by the Belgrade surrealist’s art scene, which was highly developed and avant-garde, even beyond the borders of Serbia. The members were meeting monthly in the dean’s office of the Faculty of Philosophy. Nikola Šugar also provided didactic analysis for Vojin Matić and Vladislav Klain.

With the beginning of WW2, and German occupation of the country, the Belgrade Psychoanalytic Society was banned in 1941 by the collaborationist government. Psychoanalysis was considered as a ’Jewish science’ and banned as such. So due to tragic circumstances of WW2 this promising early history was interrupted, and many decades had to pass before Belgrade Psychoanalytic society was institutionalized as an IPA society. Šugar was deported from Subotica with other Jews to forced labor, first in Szeged, then to Gross- Siegahtrs, Berger Belsen and finally to Terezin, where according to some accounts he died from typhus in 1945. Hugo Klain survived in Belgrade, living with relatives under a pseudonym. After the war, he was commissioned by Yugoslav military authorities to investigate cases of ’war neuroses’. He prepared a detailed report on this topic, using psychoanalytic theories.

**The development of psychoanalysis after the World War II**

The development of psychoanalysis in Yugoslavia and Serbia entered a new era after World War II, despite the communist regime’s view of it as a non-scientific and ‘bourgeois’ discipline. Nevertheless, during this period, psychoanalysis made its way into university textbooks, primarily at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Faculty of Medicine and in and in an elementary form in some secondary school literature, leaving visible marks on Yugoslav culture and art.

Among the famous psychoanalysts before WWII, Vojin Matić is the most significant name in the development of psychoanalysis. Hugo Klein retired from psychiatric practice and spent the rest of his life studying Shakespeare’s works and the theory of theater. In addition to Matić, the following individuals stand out as significant names in post-war psychoanalytically oriented psychiatry and psychology: Slavka Brzev, Milica Jojić-Milenković, Vladislav Klajn, Ksenija Kondić, Milica Marinkov, Ljiljana Milosavljević, Vladeta Jerotić, Vladimir Petrović, Mirko Švrakić, and Nevenka Tadić.

Matić enrolled in medical studies in 1929 in Vienna but due to the great economic crisis, he was unable to complete his studies there, so he finished them in 1936 in Belgrade. Matić first came into contact with psychoanalysis in Vienna in 1932, attending Oswald Schwarz’s lectures on psychoanalysis, psychosomatic diseases, and marital problems. He then began to read Freud’s works and became interested in psychiatry. Matić was a polyglot, fluent in Serbian, German, Hungarian, English, Russian, Italian, French, and Polish. He specialized in neuropsychiatry in Belgrade with Professor Stanojević and, as a young neuropsychiatrist, continued to read Freud, Adler, Jung, Reich, Jaspers, and became interested in anthropology through Fraser, which he found very satisfying and affirming. Thus, Matić slowly turned from neuropsychiatry to psychiatry, psychoanalysis, anthropology, and psychology, which he devoted himself to throughout his life.

In 1937, Vojin Matić met Nikola Sugar at the Neuropsychiatric Clinic and joined a group that met once a month at the Faculty of Philosophy. He underwent didactic analysis with Nikola Sugar for three years, which he described as orthodox, with precise and short interpretations. However, at the beginning of the Second World War in 1941, he was captured and, along with forty Yugoslav doctors, was deported to Germany, where he worked at the psychiatric department.

After his return from captivity, Matić was appointed as an assistant at the neuropsychiatric clinic in 1946. Through the WHO, he received a scholarship in 1948 and went to Paris with Professor Heuyer, the first professor of child psychiatry who was associated with the most important names in child psychoanalysis (Diatkin, Lebovici). Upon his return, he resigned from the clinic and ended his career at the Faculty of Medicine. He then founded the Medical and Pedagogical Counseling Center in 1953, which was created according to the French-American model with a focus on psychological and social work. Today, the Institute for Mental Health, which has strong cooperation with the Association of Group Analysts, the Association of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapists, and the Belgrade Psychoanalytic Society, has developed on the foundations and principles of the Counseling Center’s work.

Following his departure from the Faculty of Medicine, Matić continued his university career at the newly established Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Philosophy. There, he taught general psychopathology, mental hygiene, and psychopathology of children and adolescents. He remained a child psychiatrist, therapist, and child psychoanalyst who also dealt with paleopsychology. As an excellent teacher, he educated a significant number of psycho-dynamically oriented psychologists and psychiatrists.

At the IPA Congress in San Francisco in 1995, Matić was elected as a direct member of the IPA and received a special charter for the development of psychoanalysis. He passed away in Belgrade in 1999.

Milica Jojic-Milenkovic, Ljiljana Milosavljevic, Slavka Brzev, Milica Marinkov, and Vladimir Petrovic were members of the group that worked in the Counseling Center and completed didactic analysis with Matić. Additionally, Ljiljana Milosavljevic underwent didactic analysis in Zagreb with Professor Stjepan Betlheim, a direct member of the IPA since 1953.

**The development and institutionalization of psychoanalysis in Serbia after the breakup of**

**Yugoslavia**

The Wars in EX Yugoslavia in the early 1990s resulted in the disintegration of Yugoslavia and establishing six independent states through the time. Despite this political change, psychoanalytic development in Serbia continued both within the national framework and through international cooperation with the IPA.

The first contact with the EPF was made by Tamara Štajner Popović, Vojin Matić’s analysand,in 1987. In 1990, the Belgrade Society for the Development of Psychoanalysis was founded, which at one point had several dozen members. Other members of the group were in training analysis with Vojin Matić. After a series of evaluations in the IPA organization, they acquired the status of direct members of the IPA at the IPA Congress in San Francisco in 1995. Together with Vojin Matić, Tamara Štajner Popović, Aleksandar Vučo, Ivanka Jovanović-Dunjić, Gordana Marinkov-Vulević, Vida Rakić, and Milorad Vukašinović were admitted to IPA membership. This created the conditions for the formation of the Belgrade Psychoanalytical Study Group. The whole process was significantly helped by Han Groen-Prakken, the president of the EPF in those years, and John Kafka, who realized the importance of expanding psychoanalysis to the East after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Belgrade Psychoanalytic Study Group became a member of IPA and EPF in 1996. Tamara Stajner Popovic became the first training analyst, and the Sponsoring Committee announced Milica Jojić Milenković and Ljiljana Milosavljević from the first generation of Matić students as senior analysts.

With the support of the Sponsoring Committee from the IPA, the Belgrade Study Group grew into the Belgrade (Transitional) Psychoanalytic Society in March 2003. At the 45th IPA Congress held in July 2007, the Belgrade (transitional) psychoanalytic society became a full (component) member of the IPA.

Until 2010, BPS organized numerous workshops, seminars, and international meetings in which members and candidates of the society participated. The guests of Belgrade were eminent European and world psychoanalysts.

**Ethical appeal and splitting of BPS**

Along with the development of BPS, the relations of a small group of training analysts towards analysands and colleagues became more and more authoritarian and non-transparent. The lack of clear rules and procedures contributed to this. Some colleagues, full members, were excluded from regular activities, some candidates were prevented from advancing, and others were asked for services that clearly violated ethical principles. The direct reason for the ethical complaint was the obstruction of activities related to publication. The entire group of candidates and members who organized themselves for the establishment of the Society’s internal journal was stopped for several years without a clear reason. After unsuccessful attempts to negotiate with the then Chair of Ethics Committee of BPS, a group of nine full members filed a complaint with the IPA Ethics Committee. The complaint focused on the violation of boundaries and unethical behavior of Tamara Steiner Popović and her husband, Aleksandar Vučo. It contained, among other, the testimonies of two training analysts and three of Tamara’s analysands. Most of the nine signatories of the complaint had some professional contact (through analyses or supervisions and seminars) with Tamara or Aleksandar.

The IPA Ethics Committee accepted the complaint (Dr. K Lynne Moritz was the Chair of the IPA EC) and appointed three members of the Site Visit Committee (SVC) to investigate the ethics complaint made against Tamara Štajner Popović and Aleksandar Vučo. The members included Marie France Dispaux, the late Anne-Marie Sandler, and Arthur Leonoff (Chair). The investigation was conducted between July 20 and July 22, 2010. The full report was completed on September 30, 2010, and a few weeks later was sent to all parties involved in the case. As we consider the text of the report confidential, we can only say that certain recommendations were suggested to re-establish boundary issues. Tamara Štajner Popović should be assigned an IPA member to serve as a confidential consultant and advisor and asked to discuss the advisability of continuing in her official and unofficial roles with the consultant or taking a break or restricting her roles.

In the aftermath of the complaint, two opposing groups were established - one around the complaining group and the other angered and considering the complaint as an “attack on Serbian psychoanalysis”; Several IPA committees were delegated to help reconcile the opposed groups and assist BPS in developing a more democratic and transparent statute and procedures. One of the committees, the IPA Support Committee, was composed of Eike Hinze, Sverre Varvin, and Alicia Etchegoyen and had the longest mandate. During their mandate, representatives of both groups met regularly and worked on improving BPS documents to secure better functioning of the society. Unfortunately, their mandate was abruptly ended by the IPA administration, and in the following months, the split was realized.

In September 2014, a group of sixteen members of the BPS announced their departure from BPS at a meeting of candidates who were asked to immediately choose their allegiance. They established the Psychoanalytic Society of Serbia. Those members who stayed in the BPS did not have any posts in the management of the BPS previously, and as a result, all necessary documents, including the statute and rules of training, had to be re-established. All documents related to candidates had to be reviewed, and education and analyses were continued.

In October 2018, upon the initiative of Alexandra Billinghurst, IPA Vice-President at the time, the IPA Support Committee was reappointed and consisted of two members – Ingrid Moeslein-Teising and Philip Roys. The Committee is still working with the BPS, as their valuable contribution was understood by both Presidents, Virginia Ungar and Harriet Wolfe, and their mandate has been renewed. They hold regular, usually monthly, meetings with the BPS and help in solving certain problems such as complaints of candidates whose training had been terminated, establishing criteria for evaluation of training analyst status, and improving some of the basic documents needed.

It is worth mentioning that more than a decade the turmoil of inter society wounds were present in a visible or invisible form and they influenced the individual members as well as the Society as a whole on all levels of Society including our functioning. This period could be described as a latency period, more silent, of moving toward working through the traumatic experiences.

At present, the BPS is progressing with a newly elected Executive Board and Committee for Education, newly adopted statute, and new rules of training in preparation. The BPS has fifteen members, including seven training analysts (three more senior analysts have just applied for evaluation for the status of training analyst), and fifteen candidates. Training analyses, supervisions, and seminars are continuing regularly under the oversight of the Committee for Education, and scientific activities are reignited and flourishing.

1) Main resource for history of early pioneers of psychoanalysis in Serbia was a book Petar Klajn „Razvojpsihoanalize u Srbiji“[Development of Psychoanalysis in Serbia], published in Subotica in 1989. It contains material obtained for Master Thesis and is based on interviews with colleagues and relatives of several main protagonists. Other resource was a text prepared for BPS Archive by late Branimir Stojanović, but never published: „Psychoanalysis and their Enemies“, a transcript from panel with several senior psychoanalysts from Belgrade.