

Freud in Armenia: The Reception of Psychoanalysis in Soviet and Post-Soviet Armenia

Venus

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Introduction

This thesis focuses on the history of psychoanalysis and the institutional arrival of psychoanalysis into Soviet and Post-Soviet Armenia. Firstly, it aims to introduce the beginnings of Russian psychoanalysis, the establishment of the first psychoanalytic journal in Russian Psychotherapy, the psychoanalytical movements in Soviet Russia, the first translated book concerning psychoanalysis into the Russian language and the decline and fall of Soviet Psychoanalysis. Secondly, it will highlight the importation of the concepts of Sigmund Freud to Soviet and Post-Soviet/independent Armenia and the establishment of psychoanalytic presence there.

Studying the institutional arrival of psychoanalysis in Soviet and Post-Soviet Armenia is of paramount importance as it helps us understand the impact of Spitak Earthquake (1988) on the formation of psychoanalysis among Armenian practitioners, the mission of "Doctors without Borders," the ongoing repression of psychoanalysis under the SU, the first teaching seminars and conferences regarding psychology and psychoanalysis, and the establishment of Armenian Psychoanalytic Association. This topic has not been studied before and therefore a thorough research and analysis about the arrival of psychoanalysis makes it relevant and important to correct this omission and appreciate the effort of practitioners and missionaries into making psychoanalytic presence in Armenia. As will be evident, there was an active and vigorous psychoanalytic community in Post-Soviet Armenia due to the influence of various international organizations such as "Doctors without Borders" (Médecins Sans Frontières) and "Doctors of the World" (Médecins du Monde).

The work is divided into three parts: the first chapter reviews the history of the development of psychoanalysis, referring to the founder of psychoanalysis; Sigmund Freud and his famous works such as *Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) and *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901). This chapter explains the core element of psychoanalysis and introduces the first steps of Russians familiarizing themselves with Freud's theory, including a Russian translation of Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* in 1904, the first to be made into any language. Apart from this, there is nothing of substance on the subject of psychoanalysis in the Russian psychiatric literature until 1908. It explores how several Russian psychiatrists published articles and gave lectures on Freud's theory and method, resulting in the publication of the book series "Psychotherapy Library" in 1911.

It will also cover the two Russian psychiatric publications "Zhurnal nevropatologii i psikiatrii" (Journal of Neuropathology and Psychiatry) and "Sovremennaya psikiatriya" (Modern Psychiatry), indicating its influence on the development of psychoanalysis in Russia. This chapter includes the discussion of the repressive apparatus established by the Bolsheviks, the challenges faced by the community of psychoanalysts in Russia and the elimination of psychoanalysis from the SU between 1925-1930, where the unconscious "Freudian man" had to be repressed, finally, by the "new socialist man." It also explores the intensive development of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy since the 1960s., the first comprehensive survey of Western literature pertaining to the problem of the unconscious published by the Soviet psychologist and neurophysiologist published in 1968, a large International Symposium on the Unconscious held in Tbilisi, Georgia, in 1979, taking place during the "iron curtain" era and active discussions of psychoanalytic concepts in scholarly journals and mainstream periodicals starting from 1980s. The chapter concludes with the fall of the U.S.S.R. in 1991 that brought about the scientific and institutional development of psychoanalysis.

The second chapter discusses the Institutional arrival of psychoanalysis into (late Soviet) Armenia. It begins with the history of Spitak's earthquake in 1988, describing its disastrous impact on Armenians and the arrival of many doctors and rescue workers, including psychologists, arrived from France, Switzerland, the UK, Germany, USA as the Armenian tragedy shocked the entire world. This chapter gives an overview how psychiatric treatment was stigmatized in Armenia before 1988 and therefore discusses the significant changes happened since 1988. It introduces the two international organizations "Doctors without Borders" (Médecins Sans Frontières) and "Doctors of the World" (Médecins du Monde) who provided medical and therapeutic care to children with a physical and/or mental disability. Due to the help of these organizations, the Center for Psychological Assistance to Children of Armenia opened. The chapter also covers the 18-month training program that included workshops, synthesis, and supervision which were interspersed with the practical work of Armenian and French psychologists and teachers. The Armenian-French collaboration made it possible to form a team of Armenian psychiatrists and psychologists. The chapter concludes with the establishment of the Armenian Psychoanalytic Association (APA) in June 1994 where psychoanalysis increased in popularity in Armenia. The thesis ends with Conclusion, which includes the key points and arguments of this research and provides recommendations for further research.

Chapter I: General Introduction: The Historical-Intellectual Background of the Discontinuous Arrival of Psychoanalysis in the USSR

A man is not dead, Jorge Luis Borges said, until the last man who knew him has also died. This is the case for Sigmund Freud today.¹ Freud, an Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis, was born on 6 May 1856 in the Moravian town of Freiberg (Pribor in the Czech Republic). In 1859, when Freud was three years old, the family moved to Vienna. For the next 79 years, Freud continued to live and work in this city, for which he professed distaste, but which he was reluctant to leave.² In 1938, he was forced to take refuge from the Nazis, and spent the last year of his life in England, dying on 23 September 1939, shortly after the beginning of the Second World War.

Every psychoanalytic school has its own Freud—Freudians, post-Freudians, Kleinians, Lacanians, culturalists, independents—and every country, too, has created its own. Hence, every moment of Freud's life has been discussed and every line of his work interpreted in multiple ways.³ From the mid-1890s onward, Freud's life becomes the history of the development of psychoanalysis.⁴ Freud was not only certain that he had uncovered new aspects of the truth about human beings, but he was also a compelling writer who made an effort to address any objections that his readers may raise throughout the course of his own explanation—a method that is purposefully "disarming." He expected hostility and incredulity and often experienced both. But his literary skill and his absolute conviction of his own rightness eventually made psychoanalysis a force to be reckoned with throughout the Western world.⁵

This chapter aims to reveal how psychoanalysis arrived in the USSR, discussing the consolidation of the Russian psychoanalytic movement before the Revolution, the history of the formation of Freudian community and the establishment of Freud's presence in Soviet Russia. It will give an overview of the elimination of psychoanalysis and the denouncement of Freud's theories in the Soviet Union between 1925-1930. Before delving into it, I will give a brief introduction to Freud and the theory of psychoanalysis. The analysis of this chapter is theory-

¹ Élisabeth Roudinesco, *Freud: In His Time and Ours*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2016), 1.

² Anthony Storr, *Freud: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1.

³ Roudinesco, *Freud: In His Time and Ours*, 2.

⁴ Storr, *Freud: A Very Short Introduction*, 6.

⁵ Ibid, 15.

based, giving a historical overview of the topic and taking into account the political involvement with psychoanalysis. This chapter includes relevant works on the arrival of psychoanalysis in the USSR, the elimination of Freud's theories and the establishment of psychoanalytic institutions/presence in the SU.

Early in Freud's medical career, Dr. Joseph Breuer, a colleague also of Vienna, related an extraordinary case of hysteria in which the symptoms of hysteria were cured by hypnosis. Freud spoke about this case during one of his lectures. "Granted that it is a merit to have created psychoanalysis, it is not my merit. I was a student, busy with the passing of my last examinations, when another physician of Vienna, Dr. Joseph Breuer, made the first application of this method to the case of an hysterical girl."⁶ Dr. Breuer introduced Freud to the case study of a patient known as Anna O., who was really a woman named Bertha Pappenheim. Her symptoms included a nervous cough, tactile anesthesia, and paralysis. Over the course of her treatment, the woman recalled several traumatic experiences, which Freud and Breuer believed contributed to her illness. The two physicians concluded that there was no organic cause for Anna O's difficulties, but that having her talk about her experiences had a calming effect on the symptoms. It was Bertha Pappenheim herself who referred to the treatment as "the talking cure."⁷ The so-called talking treatment in this case, as a matter of fact, marks the inception of psychoanalysis. Following this experience, Freud went to Paris to study with the famous Charcot, at that time the medical superintendent of La Salpêtrière, the great French hospital for mental diseases. Charcot, himself a distinguished psychiatrist, encouraged Freud to take the revolutionary step of investigating hysteria from the psychogenetic point of view.⁸ As a result, the above-described historically significant case was published in 1895 by Breuer and Freud in the famous monograph *Studien über Hysterie (Studies on Hysteria)*.

Freud discovered while working in Bernheim's Clinic at Nancy that people who appeared to have forgotten what occurred during somnambulism may, with encouragement, be assisted in recalling these events more or less vividly. He became convinced that these supposedly forgotten memories were significant after working with his own neurotic patients.

⁶ Sigmund Freud, "The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis," *The American Journal of Psychology* 21, no. 2 (1910): 182.

⁷ Sigmund Freud and Joseph Breuer, "Studies on Hysteria," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press) 1–335.

⁸ Arthur L. Beeley "Freud and Psychoanalysis," *Social Service Review* 5, no. 1 (1931): 12.

When I had reached in my procedure with them a point at which they declared that they knew nothing more, I would assure them that they did know, that they must just tell it out. In this way I succeeded, without hypnosis, in learning from the patient all that was necessary for the construction of the connection between the forgotten pathogenic scenes and the symptoms that they had left behind. They were in the possession of the patient, ready to emerge and form associations with his other mental content but hindered from being conscious and forced to remain in the unconscious by some sort of a force. It is on this idea of resistance, that I based my theory of the psychic processes of hystericals.⁹

In his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, Freud explains the essence and function of psychoanalysis.

In psychoanalysis everything is different. It assumes an interchange of words between the patient and the analyst. The patient talks, tells of his past experiences and present impressions, complaints and confesses to his wishes and his emotional impulses. The doctor listens, tries to direct the patient's processes of thought, exhorts, forces his attention in certain directions, gives him explanations and observes the reactions of understanding or rejection which he in this way provokes in him.¹⁰

Hence, the core element of psychoanalysis is that every person has unconscious feelings, desires, memories, and thoughts. Making the unconscious conscious, or releasing repressed feelings and experiences, is the goal of psychoanalytic therapy. The only way to assist and "cure" the person is for them to have a cathartic (i.e., healing) experience.

As Freud's papers and books appeared explaining the new theory of neurosis and the role of the unconscious in personality development, the latter began to attract a small but dedicated group of disciples, especially following the publication of his *Interpretation of Dreams* in 1899.¹¹ With the publication of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* in 1901, Freud expanded his theory into the realm of ordinary affairs.¹² Freud's theory and treatment method expanded further in the next decade when the Russians first began to familiarize themselves with his work.¹³ Organized discussions of psychoanalysis began with a small group that met once a week at Freud's home in

⁹ Freud, "The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis," 192.

¹⁰ Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lecture on Psychoanalysis* (New York, United States: W.W. Norton & Company, 1977) 4.

¹¹ Martin A. Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union* (New Haven, Connecticut, United States: Yale University Press, 1998), 24.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

the fall of 1902, the Wednesday Psychological Society. As the membership enlarged, the name was changed in 1908 to the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society.¹⁴ Detailed minutes of these meetings were taken. At these "scientific meetings," beginning in 1910, the participants included the names of a number of Russians— Leonid Drones, Tatiana Rosenthal, Sabina Spielrein, and Moshe Wulff.¹⁵

Furthermore, a psychoanalytic presence was formed in Berlin by Karl Abraham, in Zurich by Carl Jung, and in Budapest by Sandor Ferenczi.¹⁶ In 1908 the first International Psychoanalytical Congress met in Salzburg, however Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist and the founder of Analytical Psychology, decided to call it the "First Congress for Freudian Psychology". The second congress on the international level met in 1910 in Nuremberg, at which time the International Psychoanalytic Association was officially created.¹⁷ Freud and Jung were both interested in the unconscious mind. In 1906 they worked together as colleagues and conducted extensive research, notably regarding dream studies. However, one of the main points of disagreement between Jung and Freud was their divergent perspectives on the unconscious. Freud believed the unconscious mind was the primary source of human behavior. The latter declared that the human mind centers upon three structures – the id, the ego and the super ego.¹⁸ Jung also divided the human psyche into three parts. However, in Jung's view the unconscious was divided into the ego, the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious.¹⁹

In 1904, a Russian translation appeared of Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, the first to be made into any language. Apart from this, there is nothing of substance on the subject of psychoanalysis in the Russian psychiatric literature until 1908.²⁰ There were many mentally ill in Russia, of course. They wandered about in the streets and in the woods and some of them were

¹⁴ Rosemary H. Balsam, "Women of the Wednesday Society: The Presentations of Drs. Hilferding, Spielrein, and Hug-Hellmuth," *American Imago* 60, no. 3 (2003): 304.

¹⁵ Julie V. Brown, "The Professionalization of Russian Psychiatry: 1857-1911" (University of Pennsylvania ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1981), 85.

¹⁶ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 24.

¹⁷ See the description of the first IP Congress in International Psychoanalytical Association website, https://www.ipa.world/IPA/en/IPA1/ipa_history/history_of_the_ipa.aspx

¹⁸ See a detailed discussion of the unconscious in Sigmund Freud, "The Unconscious," in *General Psychological Theory Papers on Metapsychology*, ed. Philip Rieff (New York City, United States: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1915), 116-150.

¹⁹ Carl Jung, "The Concept of the Collective Unconscious," In *Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, Volume 9 (Part 1): *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, ed. Gerhard Adler and R. F. C. Hull (Princeton University Press, 1969) 42-44

²⁰ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 24.

taken care of by the monasteries. But in one respect, Russia stands out as a happy exception in the otherwise gruesome history of psychiatry the world over. The European tradition of burning the mentally ill as witches did not develop independently in Russia, nor was it imported into Russia from Western Europe. Moreover, the idea, if not the concept, that mental diseases are real diseases seems to have been established toward the beginning of the eighteenth century in Russia.²¹ In 1908-1909 several Russian psychiatrists (Nikolai Osipov, Moisei Wulf, Nikolai Vyrubov and Osip Feltzman) published articles and gave lectures on Freud's theory and method. In 1911 the book series "Psychotherapy Library" was published.²²

Osipov, who was the driving force behind psychoanalysis in Russia, had received his medical degree in Switzerland; almost all the leading Russian psychiatrists, in fact, had studied or practiced in German-speaking countries. The latter worked with Jungian association tests as an assistant at the Moscow University Psychiatric Clinic.²³ In addition, as a successful physician in a new era of medical specialization, Osipov organized a small "little Friday group" at his clinic to read and discuss psychoanalysis. Hence, psychoanalysis promised to be the cornerstone for the growth of psychiatry and psychotherapy in the future. It is evident that Osipov recognized the importance of the new therapeutic orientation that Freud had developed and felt it necessary to bring it to the immediate attention of the psychiatric community in Russia.²⁴

The rise of psychoanalysis in Russia before the revolution occurred as part of a larger interest on the part of educated society.²⁵ However, curiosity alone would not have been sufficient to support psychoanalysis; rather, it was the need for relief from the "stupefying power" of the conflict coming from "the soul's subterranean depth"²⁶ that laid the groundwork for the application of Freud's theories to clinical practice in Russia.

In 1909 psychoanalysis started to grow into a movement in Russia in earnest along the lines set forth by Freud and his small circle in Vienna. It was the first breakthrough year when Freudian

²¹ See Gregory Zilboorg, "Russian Psychiatry: Its Historical and Ideological Background," *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 9 (October 1943): 718-26.

²² Nina Vasilyeva, "Psychoanalysis in Russia: The Past, the Present, and the Future," *American Imago* 57, no. 1 (2000): 5.

²³ Magnus Ljunggren, "The Early Breakthrough of Psychoanalysis in Russia," In *Poetry and Psychiatry: Essays on Early Twentieth-Century Russian Symbolist Culture*, trans. Charles Rougle (Boston, USA: Academic Studies Press, 2014), 89-90.

²⁴ Martin A. Miller, "The Reception of Psychoanalysis and the Problem of the Unconscious in Russia," *Social Research* 57, no. 4 (1990): 878.

²⁵ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 30.

²⁶ Ibid.

theory was described in detail in the two leading Russian psychiatric publications *Zhurnal nevropatologii i psikhiatrii* (*Journal of Neuropathology and Psychiatry*) and *Sovremennaya psikhiatriya* (*Modern Psychiatry*). The former featured an article by Dr. Nikolay Vyrubov entitled “Freud’s Psychoanalytical Method and its Therapeutic Significance,” in which he reported on his own experiences with the new therapy at the Kryukovo Sanatorium that he headed, while the latter carried a contribution in two sections by Dr. Osip Feltsman entitled “On Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy” describing his own application of Freud’s method.²⁷

The developing psychoanalytic movement could not go without its skeptics and critics. Some of Freud's disciples in Russia also stated their skepticism regarding the use of psychoanalysis in their practice, at the same time as Alfred Adler, Jung, and other of his disciples in Europe disagreed with their mentor on various parts of his theory. One of the earliest critiques by a member of the Russian psychoanalytic community was written by O. B. Fel'tsman in 1909.²⁸ Feltsman argued that many of our fears and anxieties were ultimately under the control of our powers of reason.²⁹ For some patients, it made more sense to focus on "the need to reeducate the patient, reorienting him toward a healthy perspective" of himself and his place in the environment in which he must operate" rather than trying to uncover unconscious motivations. For this, "a spray of reason, a massage of moral energy was required."³⁰

The most important of these developments, however, was the establishment of the first psychoanalytic journal in Russian *Psychotherapy (Psikhoterapia)*, which was largely the result of the labors of Vyrubov and Osipov. The journal made available a wide range of content. Examples of the top theoretical and clinical research being conducted by the Russian psychoanalytic community were included in the original articles. In addition, Alfred Adler’s wife, Raisa Epstein-Adler, a Russian Jew with radical socialist views, published frequent articles in *Psychotherapy* in the 1920s.³¹ Freud was aware of the Russian psychoanalytic movement: In Russia, psychoanalysis has become generally well known and has spread widely; almost all Freud's writings, as well as

²⁷ Ljunggren, "The Early Breakthrough of Psychoanalysis in Russia," 88.

²⁸ Ibid, 33.

²⁹ Osip B. Fel'tsman, "K Voprosu o Psikhooanalize i Psikhoterapii," *Sovremennaya psikhiatriya*, 3 (1909): 215-16.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Jason Luty, "Psychiatry and the Dark Side: Eugenics, Nazi and Soviet Psychiatry," *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* 20, no. 1 (2014): 52–60.

those of other adherents of analysis, have been translated into Russian. But a really penetrating comprehension of analytic theories has not yet been evinced in Russia.³²

In Russia, in the decade from 1912 to 1922, in a context of extraordinary social deprivation and constant warfare, the fragile flower of representative democracy, which had hardly been able to root itself, withered.³³ Faced by civil war and economic collapse, the Bolsheviks established a new state apparatus that was of a specific type: authoritarian, centralized, and ready to employ its full repressive apparatus against its foes. The fundamental characteristics of the Soviet state and autocratic Russia were strikingly similar: authoritarian rule, an elite controlling the destiny of millions of people, political repression, immobility, and backwardness. In addition, the Soviet Union was an ideocracy, a state ruled by an ideology, and the elitism of the party of the new type led to a tutelary relationship to the population and a dictatorship of the party over the people.³⁴

Yet the Soviet state was not only a product of backwardness and civil war but also of Bolshevik ideology and political culture, which rejected liberal parliamentary forms, a "free market of ideas," and capitalism.³⁵ Furthermore, the community of psychoanalysts faced great difficulty as a result of these new circumstances. It was impossible to function and survive without the party's financial support and tolerance. However, the government was in the process of formulating its ideological position regarding the field of psychology in general, and in addition, needed practical guidance in coping with the large problem of the homeless and orphaned children who had been victimized by the violence of the civil war.³⁶ Meanwhile, party authorities were open to considering a plan that incorporated the experimental school for disturbed children that the psychoanalysts had already established as part of the organization's overall activities.

In addition, Marxism–Leninism was the official ideology of the USSR and by extension the international communist movement during the twentieth century.³⁷ There were important similarities and differences between Marxism and psychoanalysis. The discussion of Freudian-Marxist theory is important to understand whether Freud's concepts were compatible with Marxist theory or not, considering the 'ideological war' against Freud's concepts and the impact of the

³² Sigmund Freud, *On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement* (New York: Norton, 1967), 33.

³³ Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR, and the Successor States* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2010), 192.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 190.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 192.

³⁶ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 61.

³⁷ See Richard Sakwa, *Soviet Politics: An Introduction* (United Kingdom, London: Routledge, 1989).

blending of the ideas of Marx and Freud. Apparently, psychoanalysis shared several common themes with Marxist theory.³⁸ Marxists believe that there are no economic coincidences and that all social and political events are intentionally planned to repress and exploit the worker. This reflects Freud's views of the 'illusion of psychical free will' – that whenever we make a choice, we are governed by hidden mental processes of which we are unaware and over which we have no control.³⁹ Moreover, the mechanism of repression, which is the cornerstone on which the entire framework of psychoanalysis rests,⁴⁰ was unacceptable to the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Marx had conceptualized an exterior conflict of repression based on social-class warfare, while Freud had posited an internal conflict in which man represses the impact of his infantile sexual dilemmas.⁴¹ In the Stalinist paradigm, the "new socialist man" had to ultimately repress the unconscious "Freudian man." On the other hand, a number of intelligent theorists sought a common empirical basis for the inclusion of Freudian psychology within a Marxist ideological framework.⁴² With this initiative the latter were also attempting to gain approval for Freudian theory at the party and state levels. However, Marxist philosophy confronted the wave of Freudian theory, considering it irrational in Western thought.⁴³ Freud's followers attempted to convey his concepts in Russia not so much in their own (that is, "bourgeois") context; rather, they came upon a legitimacy in the reputable manner of Marxist historical materialism.

Furthermore, Karl Kautsky, a Czech-Austrian philosopher, journalist, and Marxist theorist, had a significant impact on Marxist psychology. In 1906, Kautsky suggested that human beings have a 'social instinct,' with a natural tendency for altruism and self-sacrifice, submission to the will of society, fidelity to the community, obedience and truthfulness to protect the collective.⁴⁴ These concepts were intensively promoted in a totalitarian state like the Soviet Union because they had such great value. Furthermore, according to Marxist theories, illness without a physical cause could only have a social cause.⁴⁵ As a result, social and moral norms soon replaced other criteria for sanity in Russian psychiatry, and political opposition was recognized as a sign of mental illness.

³⁸ Jason Luty, "Psychiatry and the Dark Side: Eugenics, Nazi and Soviet Psychiatry," *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* 20, no. 1 (2014): 52–60.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Freud, *On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement*, 16.

⁴¹ Miller, "The Reception of Psychoanalysis and the Problem of the Unconscious in Russia," 888.

⁴² Martin Miller A. "Freudian Theory under Bolshevik Rule: The Theoretical Controversy during the 1920s.," *Slavic Review* 44, no. 4 (1985): 628.

⁴³ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 78.

⁴⁴ Luty, "Psychiatry and the Dark Side: Eugenics, Nazi and Soviet Psychiatry," 52–60.

⁴⁵ Ibid

As the Soviet state policy of "socialism in one country" took hold in 1924, all aspects of social relations had to be subordinated to the governing whole.⁴⁶ Therefore, under socialism, social and psychological reasons for psychic disorders were impossible; they could only be a trigger for biological/organic disease.⁴⁷ As a result, any divergence from socially accepted behavior was considered to be a part of an alternative "disease or crime."

Regardless of whether Freudians insisted that their theories were consistent with Marxism, their positions were becoming more and more unstable. Meanwhile, disputes on the ideological correctness of psychoanalysis continued all the way to the top of the party's leadership. According to Lenin, Freud inordinately exaggerated the role of sexual attraction while explaining all subconscious actions by sexual attraction. Many of his explanations are artificial, stretched out and, besides, are permeated by a bourgeois-philistine attitude towards women.⁴⁸ More compelling evidence supporting Lenin's own viewpoints may be found in Clara Zetkin's memoir of Lenin, where the Soviet leader is quoted as follows:

It seems to me that these nourishing sexual theories which are mainly hypothetical, and often quite arbitrary hypotheses, arise from the personal need to justify personal abnormality or hypertrophy in sexual life before bourgeois morality. . . This masked respect for bourgeois morality seems to me just as repulsive as poking about in sexual matters. However wild and revolutionary the behavior may be, it is still really quite bourgeois. It is, mainly, a hobby of the intellectuals and of the sections nearest them.⁴⁹

This appears to be the only statement attributed to Lenin on Freud's theories. More issues have been raised in Russia about Lenin's supposed hostility to Freudian concepts. It has been thought, for example, that Lenin knew little of Freud's work and that his hostility to psychoanalysis was motivated by a lack of genuine interest. The case for Trotsky is far less ambiguous, for his writings contain numerous references to Freud. Trotsky defended the work of Freud's Russian followers against the growing determination of the party to take action against it.⁵⁰

It would be too simple and crude to declare psychoanalysis as incompatible with Marxism and to turn one's back on it. In any case, we are not obliged to adopt Freudianism either. It is a

⁴⁶ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 94.

⁴⁷ Vasilyeva, "Psychoanalysis in Russia: The Past, the Present, and the Future," 7.

⁴⁸ Arthur Petrovsky, *Psychology in the Soviet Union: A Historical Outline* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1990), 160.

⁴⁹ Clara Zetkin, *Reminiscences of Lenin* (London: Modern Books Limited, 1929), 52-53.

⁵⁰ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 87.

working hypothesis. It can produce, and it does produce deductions and surmises which point to a materialist psychology. In due time, experimentation will provide the tests. Meanwhile, we have neither reason nor right to declare a ban on a method which, even though it may be less reliable, tries to anticipate results towards which the experimental method advances only very slowly.⁵¹

Although Trotsky's interest in preserving psychoanalysis as part of the ongoing debate over the establishment of a Marxist psychology was politically beneficial to the Soviet Freudians in the mid-1920s, his association with them (however indirect in reality) quickly became a fatal liability once Trotsky himself fell out of favor.

Despite being present in Russian imperial and later Soviet society, psychoanalysis was eliminated from the Soviet Union between 1925 and 1930 together with other unacceptable psychological orientations traceable to Western antisocialist forces. Moreover, the attack on the psychoanalytic community was part of a premeditated shift from a creative period of competitive theories to one in which any idea or organization could be regarded as a threat to the dictatorial regime of Stalinism. Due to its focus on sexuality, psychoanalysis was likewise under Bolshevik criticism.⁵²

Criticizing is one thing, but publicly declaring a medical specialty and a field of knowledge useless for any future work is quite another. Freud was not actually banned, but his theories were denounced in such a way at the Congress on Human Behavior, held in Moscow in 1930, that anyone even contemplating working in this area would have been completely discouraged.⁵³ The concept of the unconscious was criticized, considering it an "enemy of the state." Accordingly, at the Congress on Human Behavior, the keynote speaker (and one of the primary organizers), A. B. Zalkind, a Soviet psychologist, paedologist, and psychoanalyst, who earlier had publicly defended Freud during the discussion on the development of a Marxist psychology,⁵⁴ provided a crucial explanation for the attack on Freud.⁵⁵

Man exists entirely in the past. This past is at war with the present, and it is more powerful than the present. For Freud, the personality poses an elemental gravitation toward the past, and attempts to fight the past from the standpoint of the present lead to profound tragedy. For Freud, the conscious is subordinate to the unconscious. Man is preserved from the demands of society in

⁵¹ Quoted in Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Unarmed: Trotsky, 1921-1929* (New York: Random House, 1959), 180.

⁵² Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 94.

⁵³ Miller, "The Reception of Psychoanalysis and the Problem of the Unconscious in Russia," 885.

⁵⁴ Aron Zalkind, "Freidizm i Marksizm," *Krasnaia nov'* no. 4 (1924) 165-66.

⁵⁵ Miller, "The Reception of Psychoanalysis and the Problem of the Unconscious in Russia," 885.

a private little world in which he constructs a special strategy of behavior. For Freud, man is a pawn of internal, elemental forces... We need a socially "open" man who is easily collectivized, and quickly and profoundly transformed in his behavior-a man capable of being a steady, conscious and independent person, politically and ideologically well-trained.⁵⁶

However, psychoanalysis was not the only solution to this identity-defining question, which was obviously negative. At this point, the entire field of psychology was in turmoil. There was not one medical college which had a department of psychotherapy. There was no degree in psychology in the universities. Mainly philosophers and educational specialists went into psychology. This period, which lasted until the 1960s, in the USSR was longer and more severe than in other Eastern European countries.⁵⁷ Importantly, the discussion of Freud's theories did not come to an end; instead, it turned into a kind of easy target for criticism. Soon after the 1930 congress, articles on Freud resumed in this new mode. In the first number of *Psikhologia* in 1932, the lead article discussed Freud in the context of Leon Trotsky's, a Russian-Ukrainian Marxist revolutionary, political theorist and politician, earlier mistaken attempt to unify psychoanalysis with Pavlovian physiology and neurology.⁵⁸ Furthermore, Lenin is referred to as recognizing Freud's theory as "a trendy whim" which in the end was completely bourgeois.⁵⁹

Accordingly, another article appeared criticizing currents in bourgeois psychology, of which the theory of the unconscious was regarded as one of the most deleterious. In this case, an attempt was made to both denounce anti-Bolshevik tendencies and point out the preferable alternative. A new socialist psychology, free of capitalist influences, was to be based on the "new man" of Marxist consciousness, not the "Freudian man" motivated by unconscious drives.⁶⁰ Another former Freudian and a Soviet neuropsychologist, Alexander Luria, also joined the anti-Freudian attack in a 1932 article called "The Crisis in Bourgeois Psychology. Marxism, he wrote, "approaches the psyche of contemporary man as a product of development, as a complex process emerging as a result of the development of labor and social relations. Freud, by contrast, assumed

⁵⁶ See Raymond Bauer, *The New Man in Soviet Psychology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), 99-100.

⁵⁷ Vasilyeva, "Psychoanalysis in Russia: The Past, the Present, and the Future," 886.

⁵⁸ See Ivan Pavlov's theory in Victor M. Klimenko and Juri P. Golikov, "The Pavlov Department of Physiology: A Scientific History," *The Spanish Journal of Psychology* vol. 6, No. 2 (2003):112-120.

⁵⁹ Miller, "The Reception of Psychoanalysis and the Problem of the Unconscious in Russia," 887.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

the psyche to be a "natural product, autonomous from society, history, and the forces of production. With its focus on the unconscious, psychoanalysis stands "outside; the boundaries" of science.⁶¹

This period lasted until the 1960s, when during the Khrushchev period significant changes began. The first departments of psychotherapy appeared in institutes for postgraduate medical training: Kiev in 1962, Moscow in 1966, and Leningrad in 1892.⁶² Since the 1960s, Vladimir Miasychev's pathogenic psychotherapy, which was concerned with the relationships of the patient, making the patient aware that it had been the system of his relationships which had caused the neurosis, started to develop, becoming the only non-drug alternative for psychiatric and neurotic patients.⁶³ Furthermore, Boris Karvasarsky, a Russian psychiatrist, started the intensive development of psychotherapy at the Bechterev Institute in Leningrad on the basis of Miasyshev's pathogenic psychotherapy thesis.

The first comprehensive survey of Western literature pertaining to the problem of the unconscious was published by the Soviet psychologist and neurophysiologist Philip Bassin in 1968.⁶⁴ Bassin successfully demonstrated that the problem of the unconscious was much wider than its psychoanalytic interpretation— which implied that Soviet psychologists could approach this problem without being compromised by a liaison with Freud's doctrine.⁶⁵ Hence, *Problems of the Unconscious* opened the road for discussions of psychoanalysis. Additionally, the notion of the unconscious survived in the works of Georgian psychologist Dmitrij Uznadze.⁶⁶ The phenomena discovered by Uznadze, the psychology of set (*Einstellung* in German; *Attitude* in French) clearly revealed the existence of mediatory mechanisms of an unconscious character situated "between" the environmental stimuli and the action taken by an individual.⁶⁷ This behavioral theory identifies a set of essential criteria for psychological processes. This set, or system, mentally prepares a person to perform in reaction to a particular scenario and includes behavior, personality, and the conscious and unconscious. The set is not a typical mental process

⁶¹ Quoted in Martin A. Miller, "The Reception of Psychoanalysis and the Problem of the Unconscious in Russia," *Social Research* 57, no. 4 (1990): 887.

⁶² Vasilyeva, "Psychoanalysis in Russia: The Past, the Present, and the Future," 9-10.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Alex Kozulin, "Soviet Studies in the Psychodynamics of the Unconscious," *Studies in Soviet Thought* 37, no. 3 (1989): 241.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ See Dmitrij Uznadze, *The Psychology of Set* (New York: Consultants Bureau, 1966).

⁶⁷ Kozulin, "Soviet Studies in the Psychodynamics of the Unconscious," 239.

(sensation) that we are familiar with from inner experience. It is both non-phenomenal and unconscious. It stands for a very distinct type of psyche.

Furthermore, a large International Symposium on the Unconscious was held in Tbilisi, Georgia, in 1979, which marked the breaking of an ideological barrier. The symposium can be regarded as a major event considering that it took place during the "iron curtain" era, when the Soviet Union was still cut off from the outside world. Remembering the fact that psychoanalysis, even at that period, stayed as the main ideological "scarecrow" for "Soviet psychology," the symposium seemed really unique and unprecedented.⁶⁸ In Tbilisi, the number of representatives of various fields of psychoanalysis was quite impressive. It was direct dialogue and fruitful polemics with them that could be thought as most interesting and important.⁶⁹ The symposium was a significant stimulus for increasing interest in the unconscious in the Soviet Union. Apart from this, Uznadze's theory of set gained enormous recognition.

During the decade following the symposium Georgian psychological school was rather widely presented in international scientific space. Unfortunately, since the nineties of the last century, due to political and economic factors, productivity of Georgian psychological school and, consequently, its international acknowledgement has sharply declined.⁷⁰ According to Tugaybayeva, a gestalt (in psychology the word is interpreted as pattern or configuration) therapist, after Tbilisi "diffidence and alarm towards the unconscious began to subside and the foundations for a serious study of Freud and of psychoanalytical theories were established."⁷¹ Besides, throughout the 1970s at the Moscow Institute of Neurology, Bassin and other researchers, devoted to the study of the so-called psychosomatics, had used concepts such as "psychological defense" and "unconscious motivations" even though these terms were avoided or modified in the texts.⁷²

Starting from 1980, discussions of psychoanalytic concepts appeared in both scholarly journals and more mainstream periodicals. The *Literaturnaya Gazeta* of May 1980 publicized widely the themes of the Tbilisi Symposium. In an article by the three organizers, the sociological interpretations of psychoanalysis were criticized, while its specific and positive therapeutic virtues

⁶⁸ Irakli Imedadze, "Tbilisi 1979 Year Symposium on The Unconscious – Looking Back," *Problems of Psychology in the 21st Century* vol. 13, No. 1 (2019): 4-6.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Quoted in Alberto Angelini, "History of the Unconscious in Soviet Russia: from its Origins to the Fall of Soviet Union," *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* vol. 89(2) (2008): 369-388.

⁷² Ibid.

were fully recognized.⁷³ In 1987, two years after the start of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's ambitious program of political restructuring (*perestroika*) and cultural openness (*glasnost*), aimed at restructuring the Soviet body politic and society, a feature article concerning psychoanalysis appeared in the government's main newspaper, *Izvestia*.⁷⁴ The author was Andrei Voznesensky, one of the Soviet Union's most respected poets and writers. The freedom to choose what to read, in Voznesensky's words, was crucial to the development of "a science united with humanism, one that is free, open, and limitless, like thought itself."⁷⁵ Obviously, it is an explicit call for Soviet society to move toward a more truthful understanding of what was forbidden to read and discuss.

The process of change started before Gorbachev's call for "new thinking" and was noticed by at least some observers who were interested in the fate of psychoanalysis in this transitional political climate. According to one report in the late 1970s, based on firsthand experience, "there is a rather flexible attitude to various forms of psychotherapy."⁷⁶ The signs of increasing interest and fascination rose. According to Léon Chertok's reports, a French psychiatrist, for the first time, a lecturer from the West was able to talk openly about Freud and psychoanalysis in the most official places of Soviet thought.⁷⁷ Beyond the written word, Freud and psychoanalysis appeared for the first time in the cinema. Although psychoanalytic themes had been detected in earlier films, Andrei Zagdansky, a documentary filmmaker and producer, *Interpretation of Dreams* was the first Soviet movie to show extensive documentary footage of Freud.⁷⁸ Furthermore, the government daily *Izvestia* and the highly read magazine *Ogonek*, among other widely read periodicals, started to run articles that mentioned or discussed Freud and psychoanalysis.⁷⁹ From then onward, there have been numerous articles on psychoanalysis, and all this was made possible by the new Soviet policy of "Glasnost."

In August 1989, the International Association of Psychoanalysis held its 36th congress in Rome. For the first time, since the bygone 1920s, the congress saw the presence of Russian scholars, including Aaron Belkin, director of the National Psychoendocrinology Institute, in

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 94.

⁷⁵ Andrei Voznesensky, "Sovest' Mysli," *Izvestia* (December 6, 1987), 3.

⁷⁶ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 154.

⁷⁷ Léon Chertok, "Sigmund chez Karl," *Le Monde* (September 1984): 2-3.

⁷⁸ Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 156.

⁷⁹ See a list of many publications about Freud in the Soviet press, Igor E. Lalaïants and L. S. Milovanova, "Freid I Freidizm," *Sovetskaia Bibliografiia*, 5 (September-October 1990): 59-62.

Moscow.⁸⁰ In fact, there was a renewed interest in psychoanalysis as a therapeutic instrument in Russia. Furthermore, in the second half of the 1980s, Belkin, together with some young colleagues attracted by psychoanalysis, had started to implement a psychoanalytic perspective in the Institute that he directed. In that same period, at the end of 1988, the participants of a seminar led by Boris Kravstov, a Russian former jurist and politician, formed the Association of Psychologists which was to become, in 1995, the current Psychoanalytic Society of Moscow.⁸¹ Importantly, the fall of the U.S.S.R. in 1991 brought about the scientific and institutional development of psychoanalysis.

In conclusion, this chapter gave a historical overview how the psychoanalytic movement started in the Russian Empire, how it evolved and thrived in the Soviet Union before it was banned, and how it revived again since the 1960s. Primarily, the culture of Imperial Russia was interested in Freud and psychoanalysis. Freud's works, beginning with his *Interpretation of Dreams* were translated from German into Russian before they appeared in any other foreign language. Russian Freudians learned in their efforts to function in the complex atmosphere following the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. Initially, the new Communist regime tolerated some intellectual freedom; some psychoanalysts were keen to explain how their ideas could impact on construction of the "New man" for the Communist society. However, during the late 1920s, discourse on the nature of psychoanalysis and the compatibility of Freud and Marx gave rise to insurmountable problems. Psychoanalysis was criticized for being bourgeois, irrational in Western thought, idealist, biologist and non-scientific. The story of Russian psychoanalysis underwent a public denunciation at the Congress on Human Behavior in 1930. During the next decades, the Soviet Union's interest in psychoanalysis was restricted to a few individuals who discreetly maintained Freud's works and discussed them in private.

It should be noted that the condemnation of Freud's work in the early Stalin years was a symptom of Soviet communism as a system, which "decreased the effectiveness of creative work for whole generations of people," and obliterated the nation's collective past.⁸² In addition, the Soviet government was the only one to devote as much attention, critical or positive, to Freud's ideas as did the Soviet regime. Because the discourse on psychoanalysis continued without interruption throughout the entire Soviet era, responsibility was shared by every party leader,

⁸⁰ Alberto Angelini, "History of the Unconscious in Soviet Russia: from its Origins to the Fall of Soviet Union," *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* vol. 89(2) (2008): 369-388.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, 163.

including, of course, Stalin, under whose regime the attack on Freudians was most rigid and hostile. In the Stalinist paradigm, the unconscious "Freudian man" had to be repressed, finally, by the "new socialist man. However, there was a significant revival of interest in Freud and psychoanalysis, most notably due to the efforts made by a group of psychologists in Tbilisi at the Uznadze Institute in the 1970s and the published work of several courageous scholars even before Gorbachev's arrival and his glasnost policies. Psychoanalysis experienced a significant revival in the last two decades of the Soviet era, both as a theory of human motivation that places an emphasis on unconscious processes and as a clinical therapy method that aims to reduce or comprehend the signs of mental distress.

With the above as indispensable historical and cultural background, the rest of this study will touch upon the history of the institutional arrival of psychoanalysis into (late Soviet) Armenia. It becomes important to observe the connection between the Spitak earthquake (1988), the international humanitarian organizations and the arrival of Freud's theories notably psychoanalysis into (late Soviet) Armenia as the disastrous event gave a way to establish psychoanalytic movement and presence in Armenia.

Chapter II: The Institutional Arrival of Psychoanalysis into (late Soviet) Armenia

Psychoanalytic theory and practice played a crucial role in the history of (late Soviet) Armenia with a number of triggers. The starting point was the Spitak earthquake in 1988, during which the leader of the Soviet Union at the time, Mikhail Gorbachev, cut short a historic trip to the United States and asked the West, for the first time since World War II, for humanitarian aid.⁸³ The international humanitarian organizations, such as "Doctors without Borders" (Médecins Sans Frontières) and "Doctors of the World" (Médecins du Monde) lent a helping hand to those who suffered from the earthquake. Due to those organizations, various workshops on psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis took place in Armenia after 1988. Multiple missionaries and practitioners volunteered in renovating an abandoned building of Gyumri kindergarten no. 5, offering psychological services and spreading psychoanalytic awareness among Armenians. Once their mission was completed, Armenians, interested in the field of psychoanalysis, continued the legacy of those humanitarian organizations by contributing to the establishment of the Armenian Psychoanalytic Association in Armenia (APA) in 1994. The choice of the work as the main source in the chapter is not unintentional. Vardanyan's work is a proof that Armenians were vigorously engaged in the importation of psychoanalytic theory and practice into Armenian reality. It will cover

This chapter aims to discuss the institutional arrival of psychoanalysis into (late Soviet) Armenia, providing ways of understanding the impact of the Spitak earthquake on the establishment of psychoanalytic presence in there. It gives an overview of an encounter and collaboration between French/diaspora Armenian psychoanalysts and local/Soviet Armenian psychologists and medical professionals. It tries to analyze what kind of psychoanalytic vision/practice/institutional field is opened and what kind of challenges the psychoanalytic association faces nowadays. It explores whether the institutional field in Armenia is more under Soviet/Russian influence or French/diaspora influence. The chapter includes Angela Vardanyan's work based on the beginnings of Armenian psychoanalysis. The latter played a crucial role in spreading psychoanalysis in Armenia and establishing the APA. To achieve the aim of the chapter the primary and secondary sources will help discussing, exploring, comparing and analyzing the arrival of psychoanalysis into late Soviet-Armenia. The chapter will end with a conviction that

⁸³ Natasha Yefimov, "Kids Across the Caucasus: Integrating Vulnerable Children and At-Risk Youth in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the North Caucasus Region of Russia," *Open Society Foundations* (January 2010): 26.

psychoanalysis did not arrive in Armenia as a result of historical and cultural development; rather it entered clinically, passing "from hand to hand."

On December 7, 1988, just before noon, a devastating earthquake measuring 7 on the Richter Scale struck the Caucasus Mountains in the Soviet Union. The earthquake, reported as the most powerful to hit the area in 80 years, caused major destruction in the northern part of Armenia.⁸⁴ Within hours of the disaster, Soviet Border Troops and members of the Soviet Armed Forces arrived to help the victims. A group of highly skilled medical professionals and military surgeons traveled to Armenia on the same day from Moscow. Although Armenia was still a member of the Soviet Union, the USSR government allowed foreign aid and workers into the country as they were overwhelmed by the scope of the disaster.⁸⁵ Many doctors and rescue workers, including psychologists, arrived from France, Switzerland, the UK, Germany, USA as the Armenian tragedy shocked the entire world.

Before the earthquake, mental health services in Armenia were provided by psychiatrists, primarily to individuals with severe mental disorders that often-required admission to hospital.⁸⁶ There were hardly any outpatient mental health clinics functioning. Chemotherapy, supportive psychotherapy, and behavior therapy were some of the treatment techniques that were applied. However, individual or group therapy was not practiced. According to Armen Goenjian, a Research Professor of Psychiatry at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA as well as the Senior Medical Director for Memorial Counseling Associates, being in psychiatric treatment was generally stigmatized.⁸⁷ Families served as "quasiclinics,"⁸⁸ offering support and compassion to traumatized relatives. Psychologists were largely engaged in academic research and teaching.

Furthermore, the treatment of those with mental health conditions as well as the fields of psychiatry and applied psychology underwent significant change in Armenia since 1988.⁸⁹ Following the 1988 Spitak earthquake, international humanitarian organizations, lending a helping hand to Armenians, provided western applied psychology techniques including psychotherapy. Prior to the earthquake, the majority of mental health services were psychiatric, which involved

⁸⁴ George Balacko, "Earthquake Relief for Armenia," *Water Environment & Technology* 3, no. 10 (1991): 90.

⁸⁵ Armen Goenjian, "A Mental Health Relief Programme in Armenia After the 1988 Earthquake," *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 163 (2), 235.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 231.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Matt Johnson, "Applied Psychology in Armenia: A Brief History and Contemporary Perspective" (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press) 2015.

hospitalization and medication to treat those with serious mental illness. The main purpose of outpatient treatment, which was limited, was medication management.⁹⁰ Due to political abuses committed by psychiatry during the Soviet Union, there was a great deal of stigma associated with receiving psychiatric treatment, and there was also a lack of trust in the field. Before the earthquake, there were four psychologists certified by the Ministry of Health to provide psychological services in Armenia. Additionally, there were no marriage and family therapists or clinical social workers in the country.⁹¹ The Armenian Relief Society of the Western United States, in collaboration with the government of Soviet Armenia, organized and implemented a psychiatric outreach program to provide mental health services to victims of the earthquake. Experts in the field of trauma and bereavement assisted in designing the training, outreach, evaluation, research and treatment components of the program. Mental health professionals from the USA and Europe, along with colleagues and trainees from Armenia, actively volunteered to participate in it.⁹² Importantly, due to the program two mental health clinics were established in the earthquake zone, one in Spitak and one in Gyumri. In addition, those who organized psychiatric outreach programs also trained local therapists and educators who then provided mental health services to earthquake victims and provided guidance to government officials and other relief organizations on how to prioritize relief efforts.

Lacking systematic training and specialization in practical psychology a group of Armenian psychologists continued to work. Willingness to share pain and empathy compensated for the lack of methodology, knowledge and technology.⁹³ Moreover, the existing situation was not favorable for psychologists as it was not always possible to maintain the conditions of the setting due to the lack of basic requirements for serious psychotherapy treatment, such as an office.

Despite the challenging conditions, psychological assistance was provided spontaneously by enthusiastic psychologists from various universities in Armenia: Armenian Pedagogical Institute, Institute of Physical Culture, Conservatory, Leninakan and Kirovakan Institutes.⁹⁴ One of the largest outreach programs to provide mental health services to earthquake victims was entitled the Psychiatric Outreach Program (POP).⁹⁵ The POP was a joint project of the Armenian

⁹⁰ Goenjian, "A Mental Health Relief Programme in Armenia After the 1988 Earthquake," 237.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Angela Vardanyan, "Nachalo Puti: Psihoanaliz v Armenii," *Arhetip* (Moscow 1997): 38.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Goenjian, "A Mental Health Relief Programme in Armenia After the 1988 Earthquake," 235.

government and the Armenian Relief Society of the Western United States, a nonprofit group devoted to providing aid to Armenians all over the world.

Clinics to provide mental health services were established by POP in the two cities most significantly impacted by the earthquake, Spitak and Gyumri.⁹⁶ Thus, Armenian mental health practitioners from the diaspora joined POP in Armenia. Between February 1989 and December 1990, teams of two to six mental health practitioners each spent three weeks working in each city.⁹⁷ Practitioners received training to become acquainted with the difficulties of the situation, to teach them therapeutic methods, and to give them chances to deal with their own emotions regarding injustice, pain, and death.

An initial assessment of eighty child and adult victims revealed that a significant percentage were suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and mood disorders, such as depression and anxiety.⁹⁸ This influenced the establishment and development of treatment methodology. Brief crisis-oriented individual and group psychotherapy was employed by practitioners.⁹⁹ As a result, most of the patients underwent one to five sessions and stopped after their most severe symptoms had disappeared. Roughly 20% of patients participated in longer-term treatment.¹⁰⁰ Formal data was not gathered at this point because there were not enough resources to offer care and carry out the study at the same time. Initially, the practitioners and patients generally agreed that treatment had reduced their PTSD and depression symptoms.

It is of paramount importance to speak about the two international organizations “Doctors without Borders” (Médecins Sans Frontières) and “Doctors of the World” (Médecins du Monde) which provided medical and therapeutic care to children with a physical and/or mental disability. In Armenia, “Doctors without Borders” or MSF, which is an international, independent medical humanitarian organization, first worked in the country in 1988 to respond to medical needs following the Spitak earthquake. Already on December 1, 1989 in Gyumri, with the assistance of the Ministry of Education and the French mission MSF, the Center for Psychological Assistance to Children of Armenia opened.¹⁰¹ Famous Serge Lebovici, a French psychiatrist and

⁹⁶ Louis M. Najarian, "Disaster Intervention: Long-term Psychosocial Benefits in Armenia," *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, 19, no. 1 (2004): 79–85.

⁹⁷ Goenjian, "A Mental Health Relief Programme in Armenia After the 1988 Earthquake," 237.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Johnson, "Applied Psychology in Armenia: A Brief History and Contemporary Perspective," 4.

¹⁰¹ Vardanyan, "Nachalo Puti: Psihoanaliz v Armenii," 39.

psychoanalyst, and Tobie Nathan, a pioneering practitioner of ethnopsychiatry, visited Gyumri, and pediatric psychoanalyst Marie-Rose Moro initiated the training program.¹⁰² The 18-month training program included workshops, synthesis, and supervision which were interspersed with the practical work of Armenian and French psychologists and teachers.¹⁰³ Moreover, three parties participated in the "Doctors of the World" program: the French side, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, which withdrew from its obligations six months later. The head of this program was Diran Donabedian, a psychiatrist-psychoanalyst, a student of the famous Léon Kreisler (Institute of Psychosomatics, Paris) and Pierre Marty, a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, who took an active part in the implementation of the program. From the Armenian side Eduard Baghdasaryan and Andrey Khachatryan, an Associate Professor of the Department of Psychiatry, assisted the initiator of the program.¹⁰⁴

In addition, workshops, theoretical cycles, supervision, and individual psychotherapy made up the training program. The seminars were free and open to anyone who wanted to attend them. Their main objective was to foster communication and openness between psychiatrists, pediatricians, and psychologists by highlighting the significance of a person's personal history, early years, and intra-family connections for the psychotherapeutic process.

Already by October 1989, a team of Armenian psychiatrists and psychologists had formed. A French youth group also performed volunteer work in Yerevan and the earthquake zone. Marie-Lyn Chopard, Natalie Nome Davtyan, Claire Eberle, Catherine Bunardzhyan, Renaud Krivitsky, Philippe Castries, and Michel Kovalier—future doctors, child psychologists, animators, and nurses—returned to complete their work after it had been staffed for three months.¹⁰⁵ The latter provided enormous mental help to Armenian children and contributed to the development of psychology in Armenia. Moreover, the French were the ones who ended up in the most crucial positions in far-off places. They attended every workshop held in Yerevan, always willing to share their sorrows and joys with the children of Armenia. This is how the international program "Psychological assistance to the children of Armenia" of the "Doctors of the World" mission began.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 40.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

As we can see, psychoanalysis arrived in late-Soviet Armenia, with various aid workers and missionaries (mainly from France) which were previously non-existent. Needless to say, in theory (and especially in criticism) psychoanalysis was quite well known to all intellectuals in Armenia—philosophers, psychologists, psychiatrists and teachers. However, the latter did not have a methodological background to establish a psychoanalysis-oriented center until the arrival of international humanitarian organizations.

Furthermore, following 1991, as the demand for services as a direct result of the earthquake had waned, the two centers began to function as community mental health clinics.¹⁰⁶ Many Armenians were under a great deal of stress because of the new challenges of unemployment, government corruption, and political turmoil. For these individuals, the psychological centers provided treatment which had previously been unavailable and inconceivable.¹⁰⁷ Due to the help of many practitioners who came to Armenia to offer psychological services after the earthquake, Armenian practitioners afterward were able to provide necessary treatment to their natives.

Psychoanalysis turned into a movement in Soviet Armenia due to the Armenian-French collaboration. Children and teenagers with disorders of varying complexity and depth: psychosomatic, neurotic, phobias, deprivation, to name a few, received psychotherapeutic treatment. At first, only French psychoanalysts provided group psychotherapy (along with an interpreter); at the end of 1989, they started working in pairs: French-Armenian. Moreover, only Armenian specialists provided individual therapy (the latter were working in extreme conditions). Psychotherapy was conducted according to all canons of child psychoanalysis; theoretical orientation was in general psychosomatic. Also, each of the Armenian specialists had a permanent supervisor.¹⁰⁸ A supervised psychoanalysis or psychoanalysis under supervision is a form of psychoanalytic treatment in which the psychoanalyst afterward discusses the psychological content of the treatment, both manifest and latent, with a senior, more experienced colleague.¹⁰⁹

As a result, Armenians interested in psychoanalysis comprehended the deep meaning of many hours of supervision in a month or two. Gradually the latter were "infected" with

¹⁰⁶ Johnson, "Applied Psychology in Armenia: A Brief History and Contemporary Perspective," 4-5.

¹⁰⁷ Najarian, "Disaster Intervention: Long-term Psychosocial Benefits in Armenia," *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, 19, no. 1 (2004): 79–85.

¹⁰⁸ See a more detailed description of the supervision conducted in the Soviet Armenia in Angela Vardanyan's article "Nachalo Puti: Psihoanaliz v Armenii," 38-43.

¹⁰⁹ Leopold Caligor, Phillip M. Bromberg and James D. Meltzer, *Clinical Perspectives on the Supervision of Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy* (Berlin, Germany: Springer, 1984), 281.

psychoanalysis from within. The reason of this active engagement might be the strong desire to involve Armenian community into the world of psychoanalysis, helping them with self-exploration and disposing of the common thought that psychological centers were not useful. Apparently, they experienced delight, taking apart and assembling the mosaic of the constructs of countertransference in detail, and it was in this process that many of them "opened up" their eyes and ears.¹¹⁰ The construct of countertransference has a rich psychoanalytic history beginning with Freud who was the first person to write about these therapist experiences. Freud first defined countertransference as the result of patients influence on [the physician's] unconscious feelings and as a personal problem for the analyst.¹¹¹ At the end of the first trimester of their self-study and training theoretical cycle, those who wished to continue were offered personal training psychotherapy. It was conducted by Donabedian and V. Yeghishian according to all the canons of psychoanalytic psychotherapy vis-à-vis — in the native language, for a fee, every day during each visit.¹¹²

Furthermore, the next important mission of “Doctors of Peace” was the training of Armenian psychiatrists-psychologists in Paris. Already in September 1990 the first pair (Chalikyan A., Vardanyan A.) and in 1991 the second pair of Professional Alliance (Yesayan N., Gyumishyan S.) left for Paris.¹¹³ These trainings were giving birth to bright hopes for the future of psychoanalysis in Armenia. Afterwards, these trainees started the transmission of the knowledge received in Paris. As a result, the latter came up with several initiatives for maintaining their work with patients and psychoanalytic future.

By the spring of 1993, there were only 11 psychiatrists and psychologists left (out of forty in 1989—they went in different directions). The latter were solving the most difficult task — to find a place and structure, where they could continue to work and develop their knowledge and skills in psychoanalysis. To maintain work with patients, to develop themselves, to disseminate psychoanalytic knowledge devoid of psychoanalytic roots and culture in society seemed unrealistic.¹¹⁴ However, by the fall of 1993, thanks to the cooperation of the Minister of Social Welfare, Mr. A. Yesayan, a children's psychological center was opened at the hospital for medical

¹¹⁰ Vardanyan, "Nachalo Puti: Psihoanaliz v Armenii," 39.

¹¹¹ Del Loewenthal, "Countertransference, Phenomenology and Research: Was Freud Right?" *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling*, 20:4 (2018): 365.

¹¹² Vardanyan, "Nachalo Puti: Psihoanaliz v Armenii," 41.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

and social rehabilitation. The group received official recognition and the opportunity to use psychoanalytic psychotherapy in its work with children and teenagers.

At the beginning of 1994, there was an ideological division within the group, three members left the center and formed the nucleus of a new group, which was centered around the Department of Psychology and Pedagogy of the Brusov Institute of Foreign Languages, where practical psychology was the second specialization and psychoanalytic knowledge was fundamental to student preparation. The new group began to conduct open seminars on specific problems of psychoanalysis, to create a new psychoanalytic space in Armenia. A strong desire to get knowledge about the unconscious, challenging questions of youth and professional psychologists gave rise to the establishment of a psychoanalytical union or association. Hence, the Armenian Psychoanalytic Association (APA) was officially registered in June 1994.¹¹⁵

Since 1995, APA has been involved in joint training seminars, in the work of the "word group" (psychoanalytical reflections with the teaching staff) at the boarding school for children with neuroses in Vanadzor. An exchange with a group of psychotherapists from Karabakh working under the guidance of "Doctors without Borders" and in cooperation with the Psychological Center for Children in Gyumri have begun. Furthermore, the Armenian Psychoanalytical Association became the founder of "Dolto-Korczak" Association for Protection of Children's Rights (President: Karine Barikyan) in 1995. This association, under the guidance of "Childhood in Armenia," opened new psychoanalytical space—the "Green House" in July 1995. It is the second in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) after the Moscow "Green Door," and it is called "Rainbow Garden" in Armenia. As all over the world, it solves the same problems—the prevention of psychosomatic and neuropsychiatric disorders, the early socialization of children, and mutual understanding in communication between children and parents.¹¹⁶

Besides APA, the Society of Psychoanalytic Studies and Training at Yerevan Psychological Center for Children operates in Armenia which adheres to the Lacanian orientation. Jacques Marie Émile Lacan (1901-1981) one of the major and most controversial figures of the post-World War II French intellectual milieu. He was known for having proposed a return to the ideas of Freud, for having founded the Lacanian tradition in psychoanalysis, and for being one of

¹¹⁵ See a more comprehensive discussion of the establishment of the APA in Angela Vardanyan's article "Nachalo Puti: Psihoanaliz v Armenii."

¹¹⁶ See Angela Vardanyan's report about the-above mentioned associations in "Nachalo Puti: Psihoanaliz v Armenii."

the key figures of the French theory.¹¹⁷ Founded in 2000, "Arevamanuk" Family and Child Care foundation contributed to the development of psychological and social work in Gyumri, Armenia. "Arevamanuk" NGO implements many services and activities, such as psychological counseling/individual and group, family counseling, psychotherapy, group therapy for children, to name a few.

Psychoanalysis increases in popularity in Armenia. According to Vardanyan, psychoanalysis was not popular in Armenia as a result of historical and cultural development; rather, it entered clinically, passing "from hand to hand," and it was paid for at the cost of grief and mourning (the earthquake of Spitak, 1988) and its result is even more valuable because it holds out hope for the possibility of health, creativity, revival and freedom of the spirit.¹¹⁸ The Spitak earthquake saw an influx of international humanitarian aid to Armenia. These organizations immensely contributed to the development of psychoanalysis in late Soviet-Armenia. The missionaries and practitioners, mainly arrived from the West, helped self-taught Armenians deepen their knowledge in the field of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy by organizing various workshops. Needless to say, the mission of those humanitarian organizations, mainly the MSF and MdM, included helping the earthquake sufferers, especially children, as the earthquake is followed by a psychological disaster. The result was renovating an abandoned building in Gyumri, Armenia and offering psychological treatments. The center became an inseparable part for the self-taught Armenians who were interested in becoming professional in the field of psychology and psychoanalysis. As a result of this interactive psychological/psychoanalytic treatments, seminars and workshops, the cooperation between Armenians and French/diaspora missionaries was strengthened. Once the mission of those organizations was completed, Armenians, learning the methodology in the field and actively taking part in the seminars, soon took the center under their leadership. The active engagement in the field resulted in the establishment of the APA, "Narek" psychological center and "Arevamanuk." Psychoanalysis still has many challenges to face in order to become widely accepted by the Armenian society. The insurmountable efforts presented by the Armenian practitioners is a vivid example of establishing psychoanalytic awareness among

¹¹⁷ David Pavón-Cuéllar, "Lacan, Jacques (1901–1981)," *The International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest* (November 2019): 1.

¹¹⁸ Vardanyan, "Nachalo Puti: Psihoanaliz v Armenii," 43.

Armenian community, bringing Freudian psychoanalytic thought in Armenia and organizing international workshops on psychoanalysis.

The rest of the study includes a narrative interview report with Armine Gmyur-Karapetyan who is the chairman of the board of trustees in "Arevamanuk" Family and Child Care foundation. The following chapter will explore the specific ways in which psychoanalysis took root in Armenia by delving into the history of "Arevamanuk" center. It will also refer to the role of psychoanalysis in Soviet and Post-Soviet Armenia from Gmyur-Karapetyan's perspective, addressing the impact of banning psychoanalysis in the early Soviet period on Armenian consciousness.

Conclusion

Freud's literary skill and persistent belief in his own rightness made psychoanalysis a major influence to be reckoned with throughout the Western World. From the mid-1890s onward, Freud's life turns into the history of the development of psychoanalysis. As Freud's papers and books appeared explaining in detail the new idea of neurosis and the function of the unconscious in shaping personality, the latter began to attract a small group of disciples, notably after the publication of his *Interpretation of Dreams* in 1899. Freud expanded his theory with the publication of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* in 1901. When Russians first became acquainted with Freud's work, his theory and treatment method evolved even further in the following decade.

In 1904, a Russian translation appeared of Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, the first to be made into any language. In the Russian psychiatric literature, there is nothing more of substance on the subject of psychoanalysis until 1908. Several Russian psychiatrists presented lectures and published articles on Freud's methodology and theory in 1908–1909. The "Psychotherapy Library" book series was first published in 1911. Without its critics and opponents, the growing psychoanalytic movement would not be possible. While Alfred Adler, Jung, and other of Freud's students in Europe disagreed with their professor on various aspects of his theory, some of his students in Russia expressed their doubts about using psychoanalysis in their work. The exigencies of the First World War and the 1917 revolutions forced the dissolution of the first Russian Psychoanalytic Society. In accordance with some Bolshevik regulations, it was recreated in 1921 as the Soviet Psychoanalytic Institute. After psychoanalysis was condemned in 1930, a new paradigm formed in 1989 as a result of the emergence of multiple competing psychoanalytic societies and institutions.

In the West, psychoanalysts have typically operated in capitalist societies where profitable private practice and patient-doctor confidentiality have been, if not guaranteed, at least the presumptive modes of professional activity. Governments hardly had any impact. This was typically the case for the early Freudians in pre-revolutionary Russia, albeit even there, the state played a larger role than it did in the majority of pre-World War I Western European nations. However, following the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917 fundamentally altered this relationship. Psychoanalysts soon found that they could not maintain private practices in a communist society, and initially succeeded in gaining government support for their work.

Forced to work in a centralized state legitimized by a revolutionary ideology, members of the Soviet Union's psychoanalytic community had to explain their mere existence in that ideological environment. For more than thirty years, significantly longer than the number of years when psychoanalytic practice was officially permitted, Soviet leaders and scholars carried on a relentless "ideological struggle" against Freudian ideas and influences. Psychoanalysis was clearly considered as a threat to the postrevolutionary state by party officials, including Stalin. According to the Stalinist paradigm, the "new socialist man" eventually had to suppress the unconscious "Freudian man."

It was not by chance that the two historical occasions in the entire Soviet era when psychoanalysis was allowed to function as a psychological theory and a form of therapeutic practice coincided with the removal of the cultural barrier to the West. The first occasion was during the New Economic Policy in the early 1920s, when Western influences in various forms were allowed to enter the country. The second occurred during Gorbachev's perestroika policies, when Westernization was pushed even further. In both instances, there was a relaxation of the authority of the values of Soviet collectivism over the desire for individualist activity and private space in society that functioned independently. Psychoanalysis has historically thrived in precisely these historical contexts, not because it makes any verifiable claims to scientific truth about the nature of the human personality, but rather because people can accept its interpretation of reality and because it seemed to provide solutions to some social needs, whether therapeutic or epistemological.

The institutional arrival of psychoanalysis into (late Soviet) Armenia is undoubtedly linked to the earthquake of Spitak, 1988. As a result of this disastrous event, many doctors and rescue workers, including psychologists, arrived from France, Switzerland, the UK, Germany, USA as the Armenian tragedy shocked the entire world. Following the earthquake, international humanitarian organizations, such as "Doctors without Borders" and "Doctors of the World," supported Armenians by providing western applied psychology techniques such as psychotherapy. Due to political abuses committed by psychiatry during the Soviet Union, seeking psychiatric treatment was stigmatized. Hence, it was an unprecedented phenomenon under the Soviet totalitarian regime to organize workshops and seminars about psychoanalysis in Armenia.

Due to the Armenian-French collaboration, psychoanalysis became a movement in Soviet Armenia. As a result, Armenians interested in psychoanalysis grasped the profound significance

of several hours of supervision within a month or two. The efforts of creating a psychoanalytic space in Armenia resulted in the established of the psychological center in Yerevan, which was the part of the psychological center in Gyumri, created by the MSF., then the successor of the center became the "Narek" Psychological Services Center." Furthermore, a strong desire to spread Freud's theory in Armenia, led to the formation of a psychoanalytical union or group. As a result, the Armenian Psychoanalytic Association (APA) was formally established in June 1994. Furthermore, the establishment of "Arevamanuk" in 2000, a living part of MSF legacy, influenced on making the psychoanalytic presence in Armenia. As a result of the interview, it becomes clear that the center provides a variety of services and activities, such as: psychological counseling/individual and group, family counseling, psychotherapy, group therapy for children, social work/assessment, interviewing etc. Due to Gmyur-Karapetyan's efforts, the psychoanalytic treatment functions in the center. Psychoanalysis is somewhat well-organized association in Armenia as the professionals in the field of psychoanalysis perceive the significance of spreading psychoanalytic theory among Armenians, including more people in it, and contributing to the development of the APA and "Arevamanuk" in Armenia. Referring to the institutional arrival of psychoanalysis in Armenia will lead to a new level of development in the field, opening new pathways for Armenian psychoanalysts and psychologists, making collaborations with the West and actively engaging in seminars and workshops on psychoanalysis. As a result, a new revival of psychoanalytic presence is possible in Armenia, with the efforts of Armenian practitioners.

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