

## METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE INTERACTION OF CLASSICAL PSYCHOANALYSIS AND PHILOSOPHY

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*The article examines the methodological aspects of psychoanalytic teaching. The relationship between psychoanalysis and philosophy is considered. An attempt is made to analyze the attitude to psychoanalysis in the system “myth – philosophy – science”. Explicated the main basic concepts of psychoanalytic teaching. The evolution of psychoanalytic views on human nature and development of his psyche is revealed. The criticism of psychoanalysis through the prism of different psychological and philosophical concepts is revealed. The influence of European philosophical thought on the formation of psychoanalysis is presented. Particular attention is paid to the critique of psychoanalysis by representatives of positivism and positivism. The focus is on the classical psychoanalysis of S. Freud and his followers and on the relationship between psychoanalysis and philosophy. It is shown that psychoanalytic concepts turn out to be the centre of attraction for philosophers of different worldview orientations, no matter how sharply and fundamentally they criticize certain psychoanalytic statements or, on the contrary, uncritically borrow the fundamental ideas of S. Freud. Psychoanalysis will continue providing the most exhaustive and clear insight into the human soul, stimulating research and understanding in many fields of human endeavour. Therefore, one of the most important tasks is to proceed with the further comprehension of the richest corpus of psychoanalytic ideas. The article considers psychoanalysis as a philosophical and ideological concept, attempts to describe the main elements of this teaching. The reconstruction of the problem field of psychoanalytic philosophy is made, which, thus, inscribes it in the historical and philosophical process, as one of its integral parts.*

**Key words:** philosophy, outlook, myth, science, psychoanalysis, scientism, antiscientism.

### **Вертель Антон. Методологічні аспекти взаємодії класичного психоаналізу та філософії**

*Статтю присвячено дослідженню методологічних аспектів психоаналітичного вчення. Розглянуто зв'язки між психоаналізом та філософією. Зроблено спробу проаналізувати ставлення до психоаналізу в системі «міф – філософія – наука». Експліковано основні, базові поняття психоаналітичного вчення. Розкрито еволюцію психоаналітичних поглядів на природу людини та розвиток її психіки. Показано критику психоаналізу крізь призму різних психологічних і філософських концепцій. Розкрито вплив європейської філософської думки на становлення психоаналізу. Особливу увагу приділено критиці психоаналізу представниками позитивізму та постпозитивізму. Акцентовано на класичному психоаналізі З. Фрейда та його послідовників, співвідношенні психоаналізу та філософії. Показано, наскільки гостро вони критикують окремі психоаналітичні положення чи, навпаки, некритично запозичують основні ідеї З. Фрейда. Психоаналіз забезпечує найглибше проникнення в душу людини, стимулює дослідження в багатьох сферах сучасного гуманітарного знання. У зв'язку із цим одним із найважливіших завдань є подальше осмислення психоаналітичних ідей. У статті психоаналіз розглядається як філософсько-світоглядна концепція, зроблені спроби опису основних елементів цього вчення. Зроблено реконструкцію проблемного поля психоаналітичної філософії, яка вписує її, відповідно, в історико-філософський процес як одну з невід'ємних його частин.*

**Ключові слова:** філософія, світогляд, міф, наука, психоаналіз, сциєнтизм, антисциєнтизм.

**Introduction.** The numerous judgments of different authors on psychoanalysis testify to the existence of diverse, sometimes polar views on the issue of S. Freud's teaching. Given the increased interest in psychoanalysis in modern society, it is possible to turn to the legacy of S. Freud and his followers, and to focus on the correlation between psychoanalysis and philosophy.

6 May 2021 marks the 165<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud. The importance of this figure in the history of psychology and in the history of culture cannot be overestimated, even if we list all his incredible merits. According to A. Sosland, “the significance of Grossvaeterchen (Grossvaeterchen – grandfather – a common nickname of S. Freud in the psychoanalytic community) cannot be adequately assessed if we consider them only within psychoanalysis and the psychoanalytic community. His

legacy can be fully understood starting from a large cultural context – that is the appropriate frame for the scope of his personality” [1, p. 170].

**Materials and methods.** The study used methods of disciplinary, interdisciplinary, general scientific and philosophical levels. The methodological basis of the study is a systematic interdisciplinary approach, which allows the use of theoretical provisions of philosophical anthropology and psychology. When using authentic texts, we apply general scientific methods; analysis and synthesis, induction, deduction and analogy, abstraction, generalization, idealization, formalization.

**Discussion.** To address the main issues, it is necessary to distinguish the basic concepts used in the course of the work. Psychoanalysis (from Greek ψυχή – soul and ἀνάλυσις – decomposition, dissection) is part of psychotherapy, a medical research method

developed by S. Freud to diagnose and treat hysteria. It was then reinterpreted by its founder as a psychological doctrine aimed at exploring the hidden connections and foundations of the human soul. This doctrine is based on the assumption that a certain complex of pathological ideas, in particular sexual ones, are “forced out” of the conscious sphere and already act from the unconscious (which is thought of as the sphere of domination of sexual drives) and under various masks and vestments penetrates the consciousness and threatens the spiritual unity of the self, included in the world around it.

As a result of such displaced “complexes” they saw the cause of forgetting, reservations, dreams, false actions, neurosis (hysteria). They tried to treat them in such a way that in the course of conversation (analysis) they could freely evoke these complexes from depth of the unconscious and resolve them (by a conversation or appropriate actions), giving the patient the opportunity to react. Proponents of psychoanalysis attribute a central role to the sexual “libido”, viewing the mental life as a sphere dominated by unconscious sexual drives for pleasure or displeasure. Based on the foregoing, the essence of psychoanalysis can be viewed on the following levels:

- as a myth;
- as a method of treating mental illness (psychoanalytic theory);
- as a system of knowledge about human behavior;
- as a worldview system and philosophy [2, p. 66].

An important moment in the creation of psychoanalysis was S. Freud’s rejection of hypnosis. For about five years (1887–1892) S. Freud regularly used hypnosis in his medical practice. Then he restricted the scope of its use, and since 1896 he ceased using hypnosis as a therapeutic agent, and only occasionally resorted to it for experimental purposes [3, p. 159].

It was this refusal that proved to be the dominant sign of the transition from pre-scientific psychotherapy to scientism and objectivity. The most important expression of the scientific nature of psychoanalysis for S. Freud was the ability to establish causal relations in the sphere of human consciousness and behavior. S. Freud connects his ideas about the scientific nature of psychoanalysis both with the possibilities of describing the “topics” (places), “dynamics” (mode of functioning) and “energy” (driving forces) of the unconscious, and with the practice of clinical work [4, p. 288]. It should be remembered that S. Freud felt “extreme disgust” towards the whole academic philosophy [5, p. 169].

He categorically denied the connection between psychoanalysis and philosophy and sought to repudiate it at every opportunity, preferring to bring clinical material or the results of introspection to the forefront of his work. S. Freud’s “forgetfulness” about his philosophical origins can be explained by the fact that he wanted to appear in the eyes of others as a true scientist, not building his theories on dubious abstract speculation. There is a good reason to argue that at the time S. Freud formulated his main psychoanalytic hypotheses, he drew on philosophical ideas about the nature and mechanisms of the functioning

of the human psyche rather than on clinical experience. He was well acquainted with the ideas of the ancient Greek authors, as well as with the works of F. Nietzsche and A. Schopenhauer [6, p. 113].

At the same time, S. Freud repeatedly reiterated that he left the “fabrication of a world view” to philosophers, while he himself remained a scientist and physician. He believed that “psychoanalysis is not capable of creating its own worldview, although it does not need to, because it is part of science and can be attached to a scientific worldview. But it should hardly be called that, because not everything is open to it, it is far from perfect and it is not complete and systematic” [7, p. 389].

The idea of psychoanalysis and its philosophical basis was critically examined by one of the most authoritative postmodern philosophers, J. Derrida. He believes “that the theory of psychoanalysis as such owes nothing to Schopenhauer, and even less to F. Nietzsche. It has inherited from them no more than the appearance of concepts, simply put, false values, assignations without appropriate content. The words and concepts of A. Schopenhauer and F. Nietzsche bear a striking resemblance to those used in psychoanalysis. But they lack the content filling characteristic of psychoanalysis, which is the only guarantor of their meaning and use” [8, p. 413]. Analysing J. Derrida’s “The Freudian Passion”, we can conclude that S. Freud was right to consider the significance of the philosophical influences on him to be negligible compared to the significance of his own psychological experience, which was essentially social.

Another psychoanalyst known for his frenzied struggle for the classical legacy of S. Freud and his radical revision of his psychoanalytic theory and clinical practice, J. Lacan did not consider psychoanalysis a science, but rather an applied activity.

At the same time it is a practice that is a moment of theory and inextricably linked to it, because analytic experience is, according to J. Lacan, “nothing else but the structure of discourse” Lacan’s psychoanalysis is constantly turning from one side to the other. It is not science in the sense that it cannot be fully transmitted by means of theoretical discourse, needing the transference. However, the transference itself becomes possible only through the theoretical consistency of psychoanalysis [9, p. 333].

Unlike the structural psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan, the modern representative of the humanistic school of psychoanalysis, J. Frankl, considers psychoanalysis to be a social science. He notes that “S. Freud did not want to just update psychiatry, but also to give a new interpretation of all pervasive cultural psychic phenomena – from dreams, art and morality to religion and ideology. Psychoanalysis is not just about interpreting neuroses, but also about interpreting culture” [10, p. 13].

Among the studies on psychoanalysis, it is possible to distinguish several main strands that, to a greater or lesser extent, illuminate the relationship between psychoanalytic practice and philosophy.

From the point of view of logical positivism, psychoanalytic theory does not meet the principle

of verification. Verification is the process of establishing the truth of scientific claims through empirical verification. The essence of verification is the correlation of a claim with the actual state of affairs through observation, measurement or experiment. There is no reason to claim that psychoanalysis satisfies the requirements of verification. Nevertheless, many representatives of logical positivism, such as O. Neurath, R. Carnap and others had a positive attitude towards psychoanalysis. They regarded S. Freud's theoretical positions not as "meaningless metaphysics", but as a natural science [11, p. 64]. Thus, Philip Frank insisted that from the logical positivism point of view there is no reason to disprove psychoanalytic theories.

It is necessary to consider the status of the scientific nature of psychoanalysis from the K. Popper's critical rationalism point of view. According to K. Popper, S. Freud proposed hypotheses which do not meet the requirements of falsifiability. Falsifiability is the criterion for the scientificity of K. Popper's empirical theory. A theory will be falsifiable and therefore scientific if it is methodologically possible to disprove it by setting up an experiment, even if such an experiment has not yet been set up. According to this criterion, statements or systems of statements contain information about the empirical world only if they can be systematically verified, i. e. subjected to a verification procedure which results in their refutation. Thus, a scientific theory cannot be fundamentally irrefutable. Thus, according to this position, the problem of demarcation, i. e. the separation of scientific knowledge from pseudoscientific knowledge, is solved.

K. Popper argues that facts which were in clear contradiction with the fundamental tenets of psychoanalytic theory compelled S. Freud to propose additional hypotheses in order to preserve the original statements of the theory. He questioned the scientific status of such additional hypotheses. These hypotheses, according to K. Popper, are those which cannot be falsified empirically, and this in turn creates problems for empirical theory. Consequently, this approach precludes a situation in which the original hypothesis could be falsified. This strategy of defending the fundamentals of psychoanalysis is at odds with the demands of possible falsification. This conclusion is a major argument in treating psychoanalysis as a pseudoscientific theory.

The founder of psychoanalysis claimed that psychoanalysis is based on "clinical observation", which K. Popper argued to be untrue. According to K. Popper "clinical observations, which psychoanalysts naively believe confirm their theory, do no more so than the daily confirmations found by astrologers in their practice" [12, p. 247]. He believes that clinical observations act as interpretations in the light of theories or hypotheses. This is the next important point in K. Popper's critique of psychoanalysis.

K. Popper believes that S. Freud constructed the theory in such a way that it ultimately proved to be unfalsifiable. But because of this, this theory should not be ignored by modern science. He writes: "<...> I have no doubt that much of what they (psychoanalysts – *A. V.*) said is of serious importance and may well, in time, play a role in

a psychological science that will be verifiable" [12, p. 247]. On this basis, psychoanalysis contains interesting points, but not in a form that is verifiable, but in a form of unscientific or "metaphysical doctrine". Psychoanalysis will cease to be pseudoscience only when psychoanalytic theory becomes verifiable. K. Popper's point of view regarding the intellectual dishonesty of psychoanalysis was supported by another representative of positivism, I. Lakatos. In the work "History of Science and its Rational Reconstructions" he claims: "As for psychoanalysis K. Popper was certainly right... From the point of view of K. Popper's fundamental requirement of rigour the Freudians were in a deadlock, as they refused to specify those experimental conditions, under which they would reject their basic assumptions" [13, p. 247–248]. I. Lakatos called the theory of psychoanalysis a research programme with a "safety belt" and a worked out algorithm for solving problems. He also emphasized that psychoanalysis at any stage of its development has unresolved problems and undiscovered anomalies.

M. Polanyi's attitude to new concepts in philosophy and science is also interesting. M. Polanyi can reasonably be considered as the founder of the epistemological concept of "tacit knowledge", which is based on comprehension of everyday practical knowledge that includes: experience of visual perception and experience of instrumental activity, as well as experience of socio-humanitarian and artistic cognition. In particular, in his work "Personal Knowledge" he writes: a hostile audience may in fact deliberately refuse to consider new concepts (such as those introduced by S. Freud, A. Eddington or G. Ryle) for fear of being led to conclusions that are unacceptable to them.

It should be noted that the conclusions reached by positivists are not universally accepted in the debate about psychoanalysis (and science in general). Many theorists consider the requirement of falsification to be too strict and one which destroys any new theory before it realises the possibility of its development.

The most widespread view is that psychoanalysis is a purely scientific theory arising from the study of specific experiential data at the junction of several natural sciences. This view is held by R. Adam, D. Icke, J.-M. Albee, A. Becker, J. Brown, A.I. Belkin, A. Green, W. Grummes, C. Dair, G. Knapp, P. Kutter, P. Orban, R. Osborne, F. Pasche, G. Pohlmeier, J. Sandler, W. Socarides, R. Heinz, P. Heimann, H. Henseler, P. Herlin, A. Holder, W. Hollicher, G. Hřanovský, J. von Scheidt, N. Scheines, W. Schmidbauer, G. Stolze, G. Stotzka, P. Ziese, G. Jappe. Of domestic researchers, M.S. Astvatsaturov, M.V. Wolf, A.I. Heitmanovich, Y.D. Ermakov, M.S. Lebedinsky, V.N. Likhmitsky, N.E. Osipov and S.A. Sukhanov should be mentioned here. According to A.I. Belkin, psychoanalysis is quite a mature science, and in any case, "a science no less than physics" [14, p. 6]. These authors do not use the word philosophy in relation to psychoanalysis at all.

Other researchers, while adhering to a position of strict scientificity, in other words, unquestioning scientism, nevertheless mention that, in the later stages of the theory's development, psychoanalysis rose to the level of speculative

generalizations, which could be called philosophical or metaphysical. But these generalizations, in their opinion, are not built into a single, coherent system, but exist only as fragmented observations of a general outlook, made in one way or another. According to A.M. Rutkevich, “setting up a psychoanalysis strategy – to natural or social sciences – lead to the destruction of the entire structure developed by S. Freud. Most analysts, therefore, choose “ostrich politics” and simply ignore everything neurophysiologists, ethnographers or sociologists write. But by doing so, they inevitably confine themselves to a kind of “ghetto” even within the medical corporation, let alone within the broader scientific community” [15, p. 13].

Note: just because psychoanalysis is neither a natural nor a social science does not mean that it is devoid of any content and can be dismissed as mere mythology. Psychoanalysis is reminiscent of those ancient teachings which combined philosophical speculation with some kind of practice of psychic self-regulation [15, p. 13]. F.V. Bassyn, F. Vytels, T.A. Kuzmyna, M.A. Popova, S.A. Tokarev, Ch. Raikroft, A.M. Rutkevych, P. Ferrys, M.H. Yaroshevsky consider psychoanalytic doctrine from these positions.

In contrast to the first two schools of thought in the study of psychoanalysis, a third approach advocates the assumption that any scientific theory cannot be developed without an underlying philosophical foundation. Based on such reasoning, they identify a certain underlying philosophical idea on which psychoanalysis rests. However, the dominant scientificity is also preserved, and the problem is not whether or not S. Freud and his followers are philosophers. They are philosophers because science is inseparably linked to philosophy, and not because of the “right” or “wrong” worldview basis on which they base their scientific theories. The aim of the authors of such studies is often not an impartial description of psychoanalytic philosophy, but a polemic with psychoanalysis from worldviews contrary to those implied by psychoanalytic teachings. As such, in most cases, psychoanalysis is again accused of being either incomplete or inconsistent. Among the representatives of this direction are names of V.N. Voloshinov, L.S. Vygotsky, A.B. Zalkind, A.R. Luria, M.A. Reisner, S.L. Rubinstein, K.I. Sobol, G. Wells, M.L. Shirvindt.

The next direction is represented by a much smaller number of works compared to those cited above. To this direction we include those authors who initially consider psychoanalysis beyond the declared scientific definition (W. Kraus, M.K. Mamardashvili). These researchers do not deny the scientificity of psychoanalytic teaching, but at the same time make it clear that psychoanalysis is also valuable outside the field of application of scientific theories. According to M.K. Mamardashvili, “psychoanalysis was indeed a revolution in the intellectual toolkit we had at the beginning of the twentieth century. There is a number of features of this revolution which resemble psychoanalysis in terms of ontological or philosophical problems with

similar shifts, shifts in science and the way of thinking in the twentieth century” [16, p. 124].

Analysing these works, we can conclude that psychoanalysis should be seen as a worldview system rather than one of the scientific concepts taken on its own, or as a confirmation of a particular socially established philosophical idea.

In other words, psychoanalysis is not seen here as a pure science, nor as a science in the service of philosophy – it becomes philosophy itself. The shortcoming of these authors’ studies is that they deal only with particular aspects of the application of the psychoanalytic worldview and do not give a complete picture of it.

Another direction in the study of the psychoanalytic tradition can be fully attributed to the descentization of psychoanalytic doctrine. The authors working in this direction – R. Dadun and V.M. Leibin – do not simply regard psychoanalysis as an evolved philosophical and ideological concept, but attempt to describe all the elements of this teaching as fully as possible. They make a reconstruction of the problem field of psychoanalytic philosophy, fitting it, in this way, into the historical-philosophical process as one of its inseparable parts. It is another matter that the number of such works is still too small to allow the opinion expressed in them to be heard by all without exception, thus displacing the current prevailing view of psychoanalysis, which is imposed by scientific research, that has nothing to do with philosophy.

**Results.** Based on the above, the relationship between psychoanalysis and philosophy is a stable and multifaceted one. Firstly, the philosophical ideas of thinkers of the past had a significant influence on the formation and shaping of S. Freud’s psychoanalytic doctrine about man and culture. Secondly, in its organic unity, S. Freud’s ideas about psychic reality and man’s being in the world form a psychoanalytic philosophy that influences the public consciousness no less than other philosophical currents. Thirdly, psychoanalytic ideas are increasingly being integrated into different branches of contemporary philosophy. Moreover, according to V.M. Leibin, one can “reasonably say that in the nearest future, S. Freud’s psychoanalytic doctrine about man and culture will not lose its influence on the development of Western philosophical thought, but will also maintain its significance in the conditions of different philosophical schools convergence between them” [17, p. 395].

The main point is that psychoanalytic concepts prove to be the centre of attraction for philosophers of different worldview orientations, no matter how sharply and fundamentally they criticise certain psychoanalytic positions or, on the contrary, uncritically adopt the fundamental ideas of S. Freud. Psychoanalysis will continue to provide the most comprehensive and clear insight into the human soul, and stimulate research and understanding in many fields of human activity. In this regard, one of the most important tasks is to further comprehend the richest corpus of psychoanalytic ideas.

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