

Maria Zalambani

#### Abstract

Russian Psychoanalysis: between marginality and assimilation (1904-1930)

The present research is an attempt to write the initial pages of a study on the social and cultural history of psychoanalysis in Russia. While the swift spread in Russia of Freudian thought and methods is well known, what is little known are the causes of its rapid diffusion. The evolution of how Freud's methods became diffused in Russia is examined against the background of the socio-economical processes that were changing Russian society between the XIX and XX century, and that were acting in synergy with the intense cultural life of the Silver Age. From this scenario, psychoanalysis emerges as an outcome and interpreter of the bourgeois culture, which has had started taking shaping during the time of the Big Reforms, and had been spreading among the intelligentsia.

The evolution of Russian psychoanalysis is also seen as following the dialectic model of marginality/assimilation, which was applied by Zaretsky to European and American societies in order to see the limits of its application to Russian reality. The Freudian method, born at the beginning of the century as a marginal and elitist phenomenon in Czarist Russia, becomes the object of a process of assimilation on behalf of the state, after the October revolution, and which aims at using it in order to forge, 'homo sovieticus'.

Keywords: Russian psychoanalysis; Socio-cultural history; Marginality; Assimilation; Psychoanalysis and the Silver Age.