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# An analysis of scientific and professional articles in the Slovenian journal for psychotherapy – Kairos 2007 - 2017

Analiza znanstvenih in strokovnih prispevkov v Slovenski reviji za psihoterapijo – Kairos od 2007 do 2017

# POVZETEK

Leta 2017 smo praznovali desetletnico izhajanja Kairosa, Slovenske revije za psihoterapijo, edine tovrstne revije pri nas. Služi razvijanju strokovnih in znanstvenih razprav o temah, ki so povezane s psihoterapijo in mejnimi področji. Cilj revije je uveljavljati idejo o psihoterapiji kot avtonomnem poklicu in kot akademski znanstveni disciplini. V raziskavi smo se lotili analize znanstvenih in strokovnih člankov, objavljenih v Kairosu med leti 2007 in 2017. Primerjali smo empirične kvantitativne, empirične kvalitativne in teoretične raziskave. Zanimiv trend, ki smo ga opazili, je večji delež prispevkov s kvalitativno metodo raziskovanja. Nato smo kategorizirali članke glede na psihoterapevtski pristop ter predstavili različne vsebinske kategorije, glede na interdisciplinarna področja, ki so omenjena v člankih. Primerjali smo tudi različne vsebinske vidike prispevkov tekom dveh petletnih časovnih obdobjih in ugotovili, da je za drugo časovno obdobje značilen porast znanstvenih člankov. V prispevku nato podajamo interpretacijo rezultatov ter diskusijo možnih trendov v prihodnosti.

# KLJUČNE BESEDE

Psihoterapevtska znanost, akademizacija psihoterapije, vsebinska analiza, znanstveni članki, strokovni članki, psihoterapija kot avtonomen poklic, psihoterapevtski pristopi

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# SHORT ABSTRACT

In 2017 Kairos – The Slovenian Journal of Psychotherapy celebrated its 10th anniversary. It is the only journal of its kind in Slovenia and publishes contributions from all fields of psychotherapy, as well as interdisciplinary articles and articles from neighbouring fields. It promotes the idea of psychotherapy as an autonomous profession and academic field grounded on a scientific basis. In this article scientific and professional articles published between 2007 and 2017 are analysed. A comparison of the empirical quantitative, empirical qualitative and theoretical research articles was made. One of the important trends observed is the prevalence of qualitative research. In addition, we categorized the articles regarding the psychotherapeutic modality and created different content categories based on the interdisciplinary fields addressed in the articles. We traced differences in various aspects of the articles' content between two five-year time periods and found that there has been a rise in the number of scientific articles. Tentative interpretations of the results are given and possible future trends are discussed.

#### **KEY WORDS**

Psychotherapy science, academization of psychotherapy, content analysis, scientific articles, professional articles, psychotherapy as an autonomous profession, psychotherapy modalities

#### Introduction

Kairos – the Slovenian Journal for Psychotherapy - is published by the Slovenian Umbrella Association for Psychotherapy (Slovenska krovna zveza za psihoterapijo – SKZP). The main aim of the journal is to encourage the development of psychotherapy as an autonomous profession and academic field grounded on a scientific basis in Slovenia and abroad. Kairos is the only journal of its kind in Slovenia and publishes contributions from all fields of psychotherapy, as well as interdisciplinary articles and articles from neighbouring fields.

The first issue of Kairos was published in 2007. In 2009 Kairos was included in the database EBSCO and in 2017 in the SCOPUS citation database of peer-reviewed research. Kairos produces approximately 16 scientific and/or professional articles per year. In 11 years 59 scientific and 102 professional articles have been published. Besides the »scientific« part of the journal, Kairos also publishes editorials and other types of contributions, for example information about upcoming or past events, film and book reviews, interviews, essays etc. At the moment it has around 300 subscribers and the number is slowly but constantly growing. All volumes of the journal can be accessed free on the internet (http://www.skzp.si/kairos/).

It was the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the journal that gave us the idea of looking back to see what kind of articles we have published so far. A description of the various types of published articles and an overall portrayal of our journal was the main and primary goal of our analysis, but we also tried to answer some other questions, such as what the

published articles can say about our journal's policy and how they reflect Slovenia's professional field. We wondered how the global and specific publishing trends, analysed by Gelo and colleagues (Gelo et al., 2017; Lagetto et al., 2017) in their systematic review about the use of research paradigms empirical quantitative, empirical qualitative and theoretical) in psychotherapy science, differ from or parallel Kairos.

# Development of psychotherapy publishing in Slovenia

In 2018 psychotherapy in Slovenia will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. According to Bohak and Možina (2002a) in the first half of the 20th century psychoanalytic ideas found some echo among Slovenian artists, but were rejected in professional (psychiatric) circles. After the second world war the communist regime also rejected psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. During the 1950's and 1960's the conditions for the development of psychotherapy slowly improved, especially in the line of psychiatric services. 1968 was a turning point because the first training of clinical psychologists and psychiatrists interested in psychotherapy started. The one-year psychotherapy course (propaedeutics) comprising theory, self-experience, and practice under supervision, soon became an integral part of specialization for clinical psychologists and psychiatrists.

In the 1970's psychotherapy became a method that was offered by clinical psychologists and psychiatrists in different health institutions. It is not surprising therefore that the demand for psychotherapy literature grew fast and there was an expansion of publishing in the Slovenian language. The Psychiatric Section of the Medical Faculty and the Clinical hospital for Psychiatry in Ljubljana began publishing a series of monographs on psychotherapy, (e.g. Bregant, 1974; Lokar, 1977) and continued this activity in the 1980's (e.g. on psychotherapy of children and adolescents, Tomori, 1981-83). In 1975, the first translation of Freud's work into Slovenian was published (Psychopathology of Everyday Life), followed by Lectures for Introduction to Psychoanalysis in 1977<sup>1</sup>. The first books on psychotherapy by Slovenian authors also date from this period (e.g. Bras, 1977; Požarnik, 1979). Another important landmark was the first edition of a Slovenian textbook on psychiatry which adequately presented psychotherapy in general and behaviour therapy and sociotherapy in more detail (Milčinski, 1978).

During the years 1986-90, new psychotherapy modalities or schools began entering Slovenia. The scope of these new openings with qualified foreign teachers increased and so did the number of interested candidates, especially from the ranks of professional helpers (not only clinical psychologists and psychiatrists but social workers, nurses, pedagogues etc.), who in psychotherapy saw either a chance to build on their professional competence or an alternative activity for personal fulfilment. The spectrum of psychotherapy literature, articles, translations and original books of Slovenian authors spread accordingly, but they could publish their articles only in Yugoslavian journals.

The dominant language in the former Yugoslavia was »Serbo-Croatian«. The publications about psychotherapy were also mostly in Serbo-Croatian. Most Slovenians learned Serbo-Croatian but most of the Serbs, Croats and other citizens of Yugoslavia did not understand or speak the Slovenian language. This was one of the reasons why there were less translations of important authors into Slovenian and why many articles by Slovenian psychotherapists were published in Serbo-Croatian.

The next imporant phase in the development of Slovenian psychotherapy took place in the 1990's when different schools of psychotherapy began to collaborate to promote the idea of psychotherapy as an autonomous profession. In 1998 seven societies joined to form the SlovenianUmbrella Association for Psychotherapy (SKZP) representing the following modalities: integrative gestalt psychotherapy, transactional analysis (two different societies), logotherapy, reality therapy, gestalt and systemic therapy. Since then some more important modalities have joined: psychoanalysis, transpersonal, psychodynamic and integrative relational. In 2007 colleagues from all these modalities constituted an editorial board and began publishing Kairos, the first Slovenian psychotherapy journal.

#### The impact of Kairos in Slovenian professional and social context

Psychotherapy in Slovenia is lagging behind considerably, compared to other developed countries (Možina, 2008). It still has a marginal position in our society. However, during the last twenty five years the public has steadily grown more aware of the possibility of solving many personal conflicts, symptoms and recidivisms by psychotherapy, and of improving the quality of life thereby<sup>2</sup>. This results in a major discrepancy between the demand for psychotherapy and the current supply. The psychotherapy and counselling scene in Slovenia is chaotic and the time is ripe for normative regulation (Možina, 2010).

Set against the background of the historical development of psychotherapy it is easier to understand the main impact of Kairos, which is displayed in the promotion of the:

- Slovenian psychotherapy and Slovenian professional psychotherapy language. After the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and Slovenia's political independence in 1991, cultural independence in the field of psychotherapy and publishing soon followed. Up until 1991 Slovenian psychotherapists were mostly dependent on Serbo-Croat publications (books and journals) and they published their articles mostly in the Serbo-Croat language. They were also part of varied Yugoslavian professional networks, which disintegrated during the devastating war in Croatia and Bosnia in 1990's. Yugoslavian psychotherapy conferences and congresses also stopped, so that SKZP in 2001 started to organize Slovenian psychotherapy conferences which have been taking place annually ever since. During the years 2001 - 2005 four collections of conference lectures and papers were published (Bohak and Možina, 2002b, 2003, 2004, 2005), of course in the Slovenian language. However in academic circles journal articles are much more valued for professional careers than publications in collections of conference lectures and so Kairos was launched in 2007. Kairos is not only the central Slovenian psychotherapy journal, but it also has an important role in the development of Slovenian psychotherapy language;

- *psychotherapy as an autonomous profession*. In Slovenia 'psychotherapist' is not on the official list of professions. Many clinical psychologists and psychiatrists still insist that psychotherapy is only a method and not a profession and that they are the only ones who can deliver it in the health care system. Kairos is important in promoting the view that psychotherapy can be practised by anyone who has finished the necessary training in a scientifically validated modality according to international standards for an autonomous profession and that it should be delivered in different sectors of society (health and social care, educational system, work place, penal system, health tourism etc.);

- dialogue among different psychotherapy modalities. Because Slovenia is too small (around 2 million inhabitants) to have specialized journals for one modality and accordn ing to growing evidence of the so called »Dodo bird« effect and common factors (Duncan, Miller, Wampold and Hubble, 2014) Kairos publishes articles from acknowledged modalities thereby promoting the enrichment of exchange among them, the integration of ideas, tendencies and mutual respect;

- academization of psychotherapy. Since its inception Kairos has aimed to help psychotherapists in their academic careers. During the last 15 years studies of psychotherapy (Bachelor, Master and Doctoral) and counselling were accredited at three different faculties (Možina, 2016). This positive development of academization is reflected also in the growing number of articles in Kairos connected to academic research during the last ten years.

## Research and publication trends in the world

Gelo and colleagues (Gelo et al., 2017; Lagetto et al., 2017) analysed almost 10.000 articles, published in the period 2003 - 2013 in 15 relevant psychotherapeutic journals. Each article was classified according to one of the following research paradigms: empirical quantitative, empirical qualitative, and theoretical (see Gelo, Braakmann and Benetka, 2008; Gelo and Manzo, 2015; Mörtl and Gelo, 2015).Coherently with expecn tations it was found that psychotherapeutic journals differ significantly regarding the research paradigm and the related contents their editors endorse.

Surprisingly, 5 journals out of 15 publish more theoretical than other but only one journal publishes a consistent part of qualitative research compared to the other two paradigms. 8 journals publish exclusively or mostly quantitative-mixed research.

When we speak of global trends in publishing, i.e. when we consider the average of the 15 relevant journals included in the study, empirical quantitative-mixed approach to research is prevalent (75%), followed by theoretical (20%) and qualitative approach (5%). The triumph of the quantitative-mixed approach is even clearer when we look at the actual citations from the respective articles. There is a decrease in theoretical research, a slight but discernible trend showing an increase in qualitative research and the trends for quantitative-mixed have been stable over the ten years period (Gelo et al., 2017; Lagetto et al., 2017).

There are many authors that oppose the »monopoly« of the quantitative model of research (Deegar and Lawson, 2003; Elkins, 2007; Gelo et al., 2017; Herbert, 2003; Kopta et al., 1999; Lagetto et al., 2017; Schiepek, 2008; Strupp, 2001;) finding it as:

- too restrictive and rigid,
- proponent of evidence based research and its limitations,
- indication of the consumption based society,
- not reflecting the actual practice of psychotherapy,
- serving academic purposes but not practice,
- adhering to a medical model, which is not suitable for psychotherapy, etc.

It is not the aim of this article to enter into detailed discussion about the dilemmas of research in psychotherapy but we wish to express our position which is in favour of methodological pluralism.

There are noticeable moves towards integration on different levels. Gelso (2011), the editor of *Psychotherapy*, observed six trends over the course of his editorship of the journal during the past seven years: »(a) the increasing integration of techniques and the therapeutic relationship; (b) increasing focus on theoretical integration; (c) increasing efforts at research-practice integration; (d) increases in more specific, integrative reviews; (e) integration of biological, neuroscience understandings; and (f) integration of diversity and cultural considerations into psychotherapy« (Gelso, 2011: 182). We hold that this trend is a global one, at least in the minds of psychotherapists if not in the actual publishing practices.

#### Method

Kairos is published twice a year from its inception in 2007, which amounts to 22 double issues or 44 regular issues up to the end of 2017. We included all the issues in our analysis. We only omitted the year 2017 when we compared two publishing periods for trends, i.e. 2007 - 2011 and 2012 - 2016.

We focused on the scientific and professional articles. We (the authors) collaboratively created various categories into which we ascribed the contributions. Categories were logically invented with the aim of providing simple but meaningful tools for the analysis.

We chose three broad categories: a) psychotherapeutic modality, b) content and c) theory vs. research.

The articles dealt with the following *psychotherapeutic modalities*: group psychotherapy, psychoanalysis (including various psychoanalytically oriented therapies as well as group analysis), systemic psychotherapy, gestalt, relational psychotherapy, analytical psychology, psychodynamic psychotherapy (explorative and partly bodily oriented), psychosynthesis, psychodrama, transactional analysis, integrative psychotherapy, cognitive behavioural psychotherapy, transpersonal psychotherapy and psychotherapy. Category »psychotherapy« comprises trans-theoretical approaches, meta theoretical psychotherapy concepts, social and ethical frame of psychotherapy and common, therapist and client extra-therapeutic factors.

*Content categories* are:

- 1. neuroscience, including neurobiology, correlations between neuroscientific findings and psychotherapy process and outcome;
- 2. anthropology<sup>4</sup>, including broad topics concerning ethics, social factors, cybernetics, emotions, personality, relationships, history of certain phenomena, unconscious and dreams;
- 3. spirituality, including topics applying to spiritual practices theories and ree ligions and subjects pertaining to analytical psychology and transpersonal psychotherapy;
- 4. historical development of psychotherapy, including: a) current state of psychotherapy, b) its scientific status and c) education;
- 5. psycho-traumatology, including: a) trauma in a narrow sense and psychopathology of trauma, b) cumulative trauma and c) developmental dysfunctions;
- 6. phenomenology, including all articles applying the phenomenological approach;
- 7. group psychotherapy.

Category *theory/research* was given to scientific articles in accordance with their respective orientation. Category »research« was further divided into qualitative, quantitative and mixed.

Accordingly, all the contributions were attributed three categories with respect to modality, content and theory vs. research. »Group analysis« is both a modality and content category.

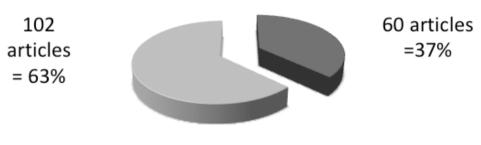
Where possible and plausible we looked for associations between our results and a broad range of factors, such as the journal's policy, state of the profession, academic world and education in Slovenia. We compared some of the results with the results of the work of Gelo et al. (2017) and Lagetto et al. (2017).

# Results

Below are the graphs with the numbers of articles for specific categories for the period 2007 - 2017.

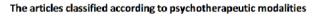
All together 162 scientific and professional articles were published, of which 60 (37%) are scientific and 102 (63%) professional. Twenty articles (12%) were published by authors who live and work outside Slovenia.

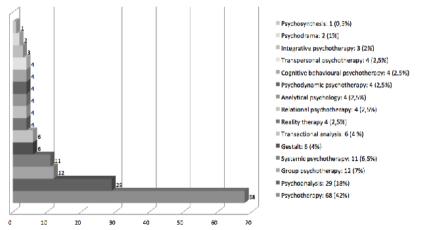




*Graph 1: Number of scientific and professional articles published in Kairos in the period 2007-2017* 

Then we classified the number of scientific and professional articles according to categories of psychotherapeutic modalities: psychotherapy 68 (42%), psychoanalysis 29 (18%), group psychotherapy 12 (7%), systemic psychotherapy 11 (6,5%), gestalt therapy 6 (4%), transactional analysis 6 (4%), reality therapy 4 (2,5%), relational psychotherapy 4 (2,5%), analytical psychology 4 (2,5%), psychodynamic psychotherapy 4 (2,5%), integrative psychotherapy 3 (2%), psychodrama 2 (1%) and psychosynthesis 1 (0,5%)

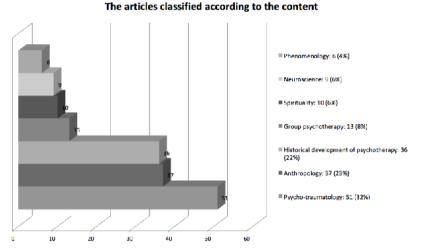




*Graph 2: Number of scientific and professional articles classified according to psychotherapeutic modalities published in Kairos in the period 2007-2017* 

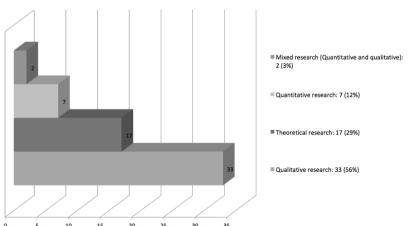
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Afterwards we classified the number of scientific and professional articles according to the content categories: psycho-traumatology 51 (32%), anthropology 37 (23%), historical development of psychotherapy 36 (22%), group psychotherapy 12 (7%), spirituality 10 (6%), neuroscience 9 (6%) and phenomenology 6 (4%).



*Graph 3: Number of scientific and professional articles classified according to the content in Kairos in the period 2007-2017* 

Then we classified the number of scientific articles regarding research methodology: qualitative research 33 (56%), theoretical research 17 (29%), quantitative research 7 (12%) and mixed research (quantitative and qualitative) 2 (3%).



#### The scientific articles regarding research methodology

*Graph 4: Number of scientific articles regarding research methodology in Kairos in the period 2007-2017* 

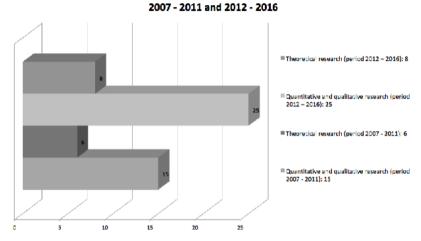
Thereupon we made a comparison of the number of scientific articles regarding research methodology between the periods 2007-2011 and 2012-2016:

Scientific articles (period 2007 - 2011)

- Quantitative and qualitative research: 15
- Theoretical research: 6

Scientific articles (period 2012 – 2016)

- Quantitative and qualitative research: 25
- Theoretical research: 8



The scientific articles regarding research methodology in

*Graph 5: Comparison of the number of scientific articles regarding research methodology in Kairos between the periods 2007-2011 and 2012-2016* 

## Discussion

There are too many factors involved when we think of the influences that have shaped the profile of our journal. It was not our goal to investigate them but in some instances we allowed ourselves speculations as to the possible connections. So let us begin with some facts that are the product of our knowing and experience and have influenced the journal's profile:

- Authors from Slovenia have contributed the vast majority of the published articles in Kairos, so that we can interpret the results as Slovenian trends.
- We acknowledge that the publisher of Kairos (SKZP) is not the representative of the entire psychotherapeutic field in Slovenia though it is the most diverse association of modalities. In this respect we must be cautious not to over-generalize the results. In the journal some modalities are not represented enough due to conflicts and rivalries among different professional associations. For example, the oldest professional association in which many psychiatrists and clinical psychologists are united (some are also prominent in the academic field, employed in medicine and psychology faculties) is holding back despite constant invitations from the leaders of SKZP and the editors of Kairos.

- Some modalities or authors have different sources for publishing, be it occasional bulletins, thematic booklets or Slovenian journals of other disciplines (e. g. psychology, anthropology). Some authors have succeeded in publishing in international journals, but this is quite rare, since there are many obstacles (language, culture, quality level of research etc).
- The journal's first decade was occasionally marked with a lack of articles. This situation prompted the editors to encourage or ask authors to write and contribute more to the journal which resulted in some cases in publishing several articles from the same author.

Quantitative research in Kairos is comparatively scarce (12%). The proportion does not correspond to the global trend and only two journals in the analysis of Gelo et al. (2017; Lagetto et al., 2017) have a comparable percentage. How can this phenomenon be understood? We suggest the answer lies in the fact that Kairos is currently still a young and local journal with no established tradition and without wider associations within the psychotherapeutic world. Until recently Kairos was not included in a relevant citation base. This made Kairos unattractive for experienced and academically ambitious authors who undertake quantitative research. Furthermore, the academization of psychotherapy in Slovenia is still in a relatively young phase. Psychotherapy is not yet so well established as a field for scientific research as to get financial support from governmental research funds. There are no psychotherapy research teams in the universities with long term research programmes. Research is mostly done by enthusiasts who work alone and who have relatively small opportunities to continue their Master or PhD investigations.

The prevalence of qualitative research in Kairos is obvious (56%). We think this is due to its easier and cheaper implementation along with the lack of research finances and personnel in Slovenia. We also think that the editors' policy of methodological pluralism is an important factor.

Theoretical research (20%) in Kairos corresponds roughly to the global picture.

The overall profile of research in Kairos is, however, quite unusual and does not match any of the 15 journals in the Lagetto et al. study, especially because of the high percentage of qualitative research. The only comparable journal in this respect has a much higher percentage of quantitative research.

A comparison between the two periods of publishing shows an overall increase in the level of research. In our view this could be a sign of the journal's rising quality, which may be brought about by the ongoing development and academization of psychotherapeutic education in Slovenia (Možina, 2016) and by the increasing profile of the journal.

With regard to therapeutic modalities, the category »psychotherapy«, which embraces transdisciplinary, meta-theoretical and integrative topics (like ethics and the social frame of psychotherapy) is by far the most prominent. This may confirm a global trend towards integration – a detailed look at the specific articles in this category confirms this – and towards growing awareness of the so called »Dodo bird« effect (all modalities are winners) and of the predominance of non-specific factors – therapist, common and client/extra-therapeutic – in comparison to specific factors related to modality methods and techniques (Duncan, Miller, Wampold and Hubble, 2014). The authors that have been published in Kairos are far more interested in the integration of different psychotherapy approaches and in non-specific factors than in themes that are specific for their modalities.

With regard to specific psychotherapeutic modalities we can see the prominence of psychoanalysis, which has a long tradition in Slovenia. This is followed by group and systemic psychotherapy. Group psychotherapy is practised by many modalities as one of the therapeutic forms or frames. All of these three most frequent modalities are domains that we editors know best and practise ourselves. This fact may have influenced the frequency of publishing from this area (knowing the authors from this area, editors' own articles ...).

The small number of articles from cognitive-behaviour psychotherapy (CBT) is surprising. CBT has a long history in Slovenia and many psychotherapists practise it. One of the reasons may be that CBT training is open only to doctors of medicine (especially psychiatrists) and psychologists who belong to the group which is opposed to the idea of psychotherapy as an autonomous profession and do not want to collaborate with either SKZP or with the journal. The second reason may be that the Slovenian professionals with CBT training mainly use it in their clinical work and are not active in the research field.

In the future, after recent inclusion into the SCOPUS citation base, Kairos can expect to extend its influence and attract more authors. The rise of quantitative research articles is expected, but in our opinion the journal will maintain a balanced share of articles and a pluralistic stance towards research.

#### Conclusion

In this article we focused on the scientific and professional part of Kairos, but an analysis of both the editorials and the third »informative« section would also give interesting information about the paths we have travelled with our journal. In Slovenia there was no psychotherapy bulletin offering the possibility for an exchange of opinions, information about current events, open discussion about ethical issues etc. For this reason the editors of Kairos decided to fill this lacuna as much as possible. Readers' positive feedback about this part encourages us to keep it.

The founders of the journal chose the name Kairos, because they were inspired by Daniel Stern's book *Present moment in psychotherapy and everyday life* (Stern, 2004) in which he describes the importance of the Greek concept Kairos for psychotherapy and for our lives. During kairos previously unrelated elements link in a new way. The formation of new connections contributes to our experience of such moments as special and refreshing. We realize in a more intensive way that the same river we cannot step in twice. Even familiar or trivial situations can be seen in a new freshness. They surprise us. And shake us.

We experienced many such moments travelling with our journal and they cannot be quantified or described with numbers, though they are the most important. We are constantly witnessing how through such moments new connections are built, among authors, reviewers and readers. We psychotherapists are not immune from ordinary human weaknesses, like envy, rivalry, grandiosity, hubris etc., which divide us unnecessarily and fragment our efforts. Our journal is a good vaccine against these maladies because it is an invitation to come together to improve our knowledge, skills and also the position and reputation of psychotherapy in a broader society.

# Opombe

<sup>1</sup> In the Communist period psychoanalytic works were discouraged. For example, the only book related to Freud's work that was translated into the Slovenian language in the seventies was Emil Ludwig's Der Entzauberte Freud which was extremely critical. In spite of political ideology which discredited psychoanalysis, Milčinski (1975) with his reputation succeeded in promoting the first translations of Freud's work. <sup>2</sup> For example, in the 1990's our book market became flooded with new age and pop psychology literature (mainly translation works) on personal growth and self-help. Private TV stations which emerged after the change in our political system have been running talks shows (like Oprah's) which, along with films on TV and at cinemas, have also contributed to the public getting informed about psychotherapy. <sup>3</sup> It is not easy to maintain the Slovenian language in the predominantly English speaking international psychotherapy scene. Editors of Kairos must on one side consider the demands of international citation databases and on the other side take care that Kairos keeps Slovenian language and cultural identity. Psychotherapy is

<sup>4</sup> We are aware of the poorly defined and too broad category »anthropology«. Alternatively, we could have created a large number of well-defined categories but then we would be faced with a puzzling heterogeneity and fragmentation of the data.

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