

## **ABSTRACT**

“Mirror of the Imagination: The Psychoanalysis of the Film Experience” examines the phases of emotional development and human relationships through the lens of the human sciences. It systematizes the author's many years of empirical experience and is the first Bulgarian contribution to the interdisciplinary field of applied psychoanalysis.

The book is divided into nine parts, each consisting of three or more chapters, the first of which summarizes the history of ideas, while the following discuss the contemporary developments in the field. Twenty extensive film reviews exemplify application of the "Analysis of the spectatorship" method and illustrates a key aspect of the emotional life. They are devoted to topics such as childhood, trauma, gender, sexuality, inner freedom, and justice. Discussing them through the prism of psychoanalysis allows the reader to use the film as a means by which one gets to know one's inner world better, to become aware of one's blind spots and prejudices, and possibly to bring change to one's life.

The book presents a method of interpreting the interrelationships between the observed object and the experiences of the observer. This practice has the potential to sensitize the lay reader, but also to help mental health students and professionals develop their professional skills.

The theory and practical implication of this approach has been integrated into teaching at the New Bulgarian University since 2021 (BA and MA courses OOKY185, OOKI 185, OOKY 187, OOKI 187) and, thanks to the "Psychoanalysis and Cinema Initiative" created by the author, has been a sustainable part of public debates and programs of health promotion from 2010 to the present moment.