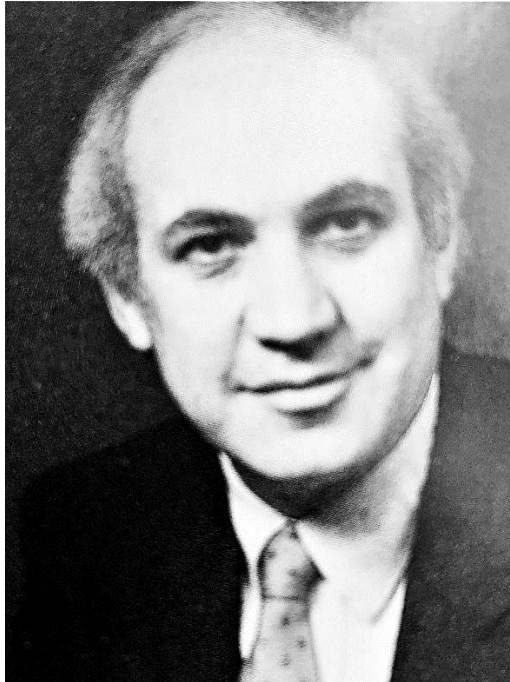


**In Memory of Dr. Peter Fedor-Freybergh
November 12, 1936 - October 6, 2021**



It is with sadness that we bid farewell to Dr. Peter Fedor-Freybergh, the great pioneer of prenatal psychology, and the great scientist and scientific publicist. Dr. Fedor-Freybergh was able to be so integratively effective thanks to his broad scientific spectrum, which ranged from immunology to obstetrics, psychiatry, psychosomatics, psychotherapy and even literary works. Because of his broad interests, he was called to create an interdisciplinary forum for the scientific exploration of prenatal and birth experiences within the framework of congresses of the International Society for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine (ISPPM), originally established as “Studiengemeinschaft für Pränatale

Psychologie” (ISPP). Peter was responsible for starting the Journal for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine. In addition, his activities were an inspiration for the founding of the Association for Pre- and Peri-natal Psychology and Health (APPPAH) by Dr. Thomas R. Verny. Both societies are the world’s major forums for prenatal psychology in science and practice.

The opportunity for such a wide range of activities had its roots in Dr. Fedor-Freybergh’s humanistic education and his amazing multilingualism and consequent familiarity with different cultural spaces. This enabled him to use the tragic situation of being forced to leave his homeland by the failure of the Prague Spring in 1968 to make a new start.

Some stages of Dr. Fedor-Freybergh’s professional development may be mentioned: Doctor of Medicine 1959, Doctor of Psychology 1965, Specialist in Psychiatry and Child Psychotherapy 1962, Doctor of Psychiatry 1967, and Doctor of Gynecology and Obstetrics 1977. He worked in medical practice since 1968 in psychiatric hospitals in Austria, Switzerland, England, and Sweden, and was a Lecturer in Psycho-Neuro-Endocrinology in Stockholm 1978 and later in Salzburg. In 1974, he was substantially involved in the development of Biological Psychiatry, which proved too narrow a field for him. Dr. Fedor-Freybergh always thought beyond narrow disciplinary boundaries. Thus he was for many years a leading member of the International Society for Psychosomatics in Obstetrics and Gynecology (ISPOG). From 1966-1970, he was secretary of the World Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

In 1986, Dr. Fedor-Freybergh gave prenatal psychology its first public visibility with a major international congress in Bad Gastein, establishing the ISPPM as an interdisciplinary and international scientific society. Based on the contributions at this congress, he published the first handbook of prenatal psychology in 1987 under the title “Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology - Encounter with the Unborn” and in 1988 the first handbook of prenatal psychology in English under the title *Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology: Encounter with the Unborn*. From 1983-1992, he was President of ISPPM, providing an international forum for the new scientific field of prenatal psychology. In 1996, he was appointed Professor of Child Psychiatry at the University of Prague. In 2006, he held a professorship at the University of Trnava in Slovakia and in 2007 he became director of the Institute of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology, Medicine and Social Work at the University of Saint Elisabeth in his hometown, Bratislava. In 2009, he received the title of “Professor of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine” there, the first professorship for this subject in the world.

In addition, Dr. Fedor-Freybergh was the editor of four international journals: the already mentioned *Journal of Prenatal Psychology*, the journal *Activitas Nervosa Superior*, the journal *Clinical Social Work &*

Health Interventions, and the *Neuroendocrinological Letters*, which he substantially developed and shaped together with his wife Lili Maas. This journal played a significant role in communicating Eastern European scientific work in the field. It is also important to mention that Dr. Fedor-Freybergh was responsible for the communication of the international knowledge of prenatal psychology at several congresses held in Slovakia under his name. The numerous scientific works of Dr. Fedor-Freybergh are available on the Internet under "Research Gate."

One can only marvel at the diversity of his professional activity. It was made possible by his enormous talent, his deep humanity, and his unusual ability to build relationships of trust with a great variety of people. One example of this was his cooperation with the Italian prenatal psychologist, Gino Soldera (ANPEP), which led to a major conference in San Marino, where he captivated his audience for a whole day with his extensive prenatal psychological knowledge.

Another example was the annual conferences I organized in the small Heidelberg suburb of Ziegelhausen starting in 1991: Because of Dr. Fedor-Freybergh's manifold connections, it was possible to attract international experts for these conferences, who conveyed prenatal psychological knowledge to the German-speaking world. Fortunately, Heidelberg professor of neonatology, Otwin Linderkamp, also took part in these conferences. As a result, he was able to use the knowledge imparted here for dealing with prematurely-born children and thus bring attention to their primary need for relationships. This fundamentally changed and humanized the handling of prematurely-born children throughout Germany and also had an international impact. Linderkamp was supported by Wolfgang Ernest Freud, a grandson of Sigmund Freud, whom Dr. Fedor-Freybergh was able to convince to participate in the congress in Bad Gastein.

Together with Dr. Thomas R. Verny, Dr. Fedor-Freybergh became one of the founders of the science of Pre- and Perinatal Psychology, exploring the psychological significance of pregnancy and birth in a scientific and interdisciplinary framework. Both came from Jewish families in Bratislava, attended the same grammar school and both lost their homeland, family, and friends during the war. After the war, they built their lives anew in foreign lands and became the great pioneers we recognize them as today.

We honor Dr. Peter Fedor-Freybergh not only for his outstanding scientific achievements, but equally for his deep humanity.

With much gratitude,
Ludwig Janus,
Dossenheim