

The significance of the psychoanalytic developmental theory for understanding the dynamics of criminal offences committed in adolescence

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The paper explains the basic concepts of the psychoanalytic developmental theory and uses these concepts to describe a complexity of developmental processes in adolescence. Special attention is paid to the adolescent crisis, to the identity crisis and the formation of identity, secondary separation and individuation in adolescence, but the paper also highlights possible psychopathological phenomena in this developmental age. Less than one third of all perpetrators reported to the police in the Republic of Slovenia in 1999 were between the ages of 18 and 24 and less than a half of all reported suspects in 1999 were under 24. on the assumption that the development age of (late) adolescence extends even to the age of 25, it can be concluded that in 1999 nearly every second reported suspect was an adolescent. Even a half of that portion of adolescents among reported suspects would be sufficient to call attention to the need for the crime investigation operative service to acquire additional and profound knowledge of this developmental age. In this paper, this age is presented in the language of psychoanalytic developmental theory, which does not allow any simplifications, but enables insight into the complexity of these processes and possible outcomes of the developmental age. The described concepts have also been used for the explanation of a case in which the author participated in its final stage.

Keywords: adolescence, puberty, identity, object, object relation, instinctive motives, defence mechanisms, suicide, toxicomania

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