Dear IAJS members,

It is my pleasure to introduce the upcoming spring 2016 IAJS online seminar:

**Europe’s Many Souls: Exploring Cultural Complexes and Identities**

The spring 2016 on-line seminar will begin March 17, 2016.

The seminar will examine the topic of cultural complexes as expressed in European countries and people through the lens of a newly published book co-edited by Dr. Joerg Rasche and Dr. Thomas Singer, our online seminar presenters for this topic. On March 17, IAJS will post to this list serve a chapter from their new book published by Spring Journal Books, entitled: “The Czech Republic: The Forefather Cultural Complex—Between Kafka and Meyrink: Why Didn’t Josef K. Get to the Castle and Why Did Athanasius Pernath Enter a Room Without a Door?”

We gratefully acknowledge Nancy Cater and Spring Journal Books for allowing this chapter to be posted on the IAJS list serve for our membership to utilize during the webinar.

Beginning March 17, for a week to ten days, your comments and discussion in response to the chapter and seminar topic will be posted to the list serve. Drs. Rasche and Singer will participate by responding to your posts. As usually occurs during our online seminars, non-seminar related list serve posts will be held until the conclusion of the seminar in order to promote continuity of discussion on this topic.

The following is an introduction to the seminar topic and biographies of our two co-presenters.

**Thomas Singer** wrote in his introduction to *Europe’s Many Souls: Exploring Cultural Complexes and Identities*:

Our old Jungian theory of archetypal possession unleashing destructive forces is good on its own terms. But it has gotten stale in its application when everything unpleasant, whether it be in the individual or the group, is explained away by the “shadow.” Once we begin to use the “shadow” to explain every destructive force in the psyche, we stop thinking. We stop asking essential questions that have to do with the specificity of forces at work in a particular place, to a particular people, at a particular time. We need to concern ourselves with basic questions of history, economics, sociology, anthropology, and religious studies to get a sense of what is happening in the world and what is happening in the collective psyche. At the same time, none of these specific disciplines address the question of how these various forces take shape and live in the psyche of individuals and groups. In order to answer questions about where economic and other cultural forces live inside of people, we need to take into account the reality of the psyche. The kinds of opinions and emotional reactions that people have to events both close to and far away from home usually have bits and pieces of history, economics, sociology, and so on, in them—but their life in the psyche of the individual or the collective is not organized according to these disciplines. In fact, what order these ideas and feelings have in the psyche can be inchoate, rapidly shifting and yet
paradoxically long standing, and often quite immune and impermeable to the reason that traditional
disciplines of thought would impose on them. Our central thesis is that all of these various forces take
shape in what we are calling cultural complexes. This is how they live in the psyche. We believe a
theory of cultural complexes helps us understand how people think and feel about many of the major
events and forces that shape their lives. In that sense, this is not sociology, which is descriptive of how
these things look from the outside—not how they live inside. I have said before that the study of cultural
complexes is more like an inner sociology with a bit of history, psychology, anthropology, economics,
mythology, sociology, and even poetry thrown into the stew, everything except perhaps mathematics
and physics. Therefore, this is not a book about history, although there is lots of historical information. It
is not a book about mythology or religion, but there is a lot of that, too. It is not about economics or
anthropology or poetry, but there is a lot of that as well. It is about how all of these things form a living
reality of ideas, beliefs, memories, feelings, images, and behavior in the psyche. This living reality does
not provide a particularly coherent narrative or linear sequencing of facts and events. At the same time,
it shapes what it means to be a European, to be a citizen of a particular country or city or region of
Europe. It contributes to the many souls of Europe. If we want to understand something about that,
cultural complexes are one way of approaching this most elusive subject. Another way of saying this is
that complexes exist in the psyche and history exists in the mind. In this study, we are interested in the
many cultural complexes in the psyches of Europe.

Joerg Rasche wrote in his introduction to *Europe’s Many Souls: Exploring Cultural Complexes and
Identities:*

The inspiration for the[ir] book grew out of the hopefulness of those early years after the fall of the
Berlin Wall and German Unification. A new vision of Europe emerged when the Communist bloc fell
apart. The Iron Curtain was opened, and a great release took place in the East as well as in the West. For
the first time since two disastrous World Wars and the icy confrontation between the Western and
Eastern Blocs, the old glaciers of mutual projections began to melt and a future of freedom, welfare,
peace, and unity throughout Europe, including Russia and the former Soviet Union, seemed to be
possible. But human history rarely has a happy ending. I remember a dream I had during the Second
European Conference for Analytical Psychology in St. Petersburg in 2012.

I went with a group of people to walk on a melting glacier in the mountains. We and our guide were
approaching the cliffs of the glacier. Somehow I knew that it would be possible and not dangerous to
walk on the melting ice if we placed our feet carefully. But before we reached the edge of the ice, we
came to a torrent of melting water, flowing out from under the glacier. The rushing water washed out a
deep bed and took stones and bushes and even trees with it. I saw a tree falling down into the torrent and
realized that I should not try to intervene. Otherwise I would fall into the wild water myself.

I understood this to be a social or collective dream, and it became a guide for me to follow carefully and
with respect as the raw and melting emotions began to flow in the conference. It gave me pause to
reflect on the difficult emotional history of the members of my newly discovered European family. The
European Spring of 1989, released by Gorbachev’s perestroika, triggered hopes for a better world and
the promise of a pan-European code of values: the integrity of the individual person, no gulags, equal rights, economic welfare, free speech, no humiliation and subjugation of cultures as in the Stalinist system. Many Europeans thought there would not be another war in Europe. But after that euphoric beginning, disillusionment came. The property of the socialist state and its people fell into the hands of oligarchs or was taken over by Western entrepreneurs. The previous guarantees of security in the Soviet system promised everybody a job, a living, and a clear albeit one-sided ideology and structure for life, and all of that disappeared over night. When the government-supported safety net for all people ended, the transition became a nightmare for many. It seemed that the life and guiding principles they had lived by for generations were now meaningless. The heroic Homo Sovieticus lost his role and reputation.

New-old national states emerged out of the ruins of the Eastern Soviet Bloc. Age-old fears, projections, and archaic patterns of self-esteem built on tribal and ethnic identities came to life again, fueled by the media and political leaders. Today, we are witnessing the emergence of a strange European patchwork of formerly repressed collective memories of mutual violations and compensatory grandiosity. This is accompanied by increasing social problems such as unemployment combined with a revival of nationalism. Old spirits are back—evil and good ones. Specters, phantoms, spirits of ambiguous cultural ancestors and their symbolic Mana energy have been revitalized, such as that of the Czar in Russia.

Increasingly Europe has begun to feel like a dysfunctional family, with its members spread all over the place in both geography and spirit, all of them reacting differently to the increasing number of migrants and refugees. One way to identify the fundamental and disparate elements of this patchwork continent is to think of them as cultural complexes. This book is about the dynamic of such complexes. We can envision with our mind’s eye that Europa, the former princess with bright shining eyes, is now an old lady who, as she gazes around her continent, is wondering how best to look after her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, her European offspring. Her family has an impressive cultural history. It is a colorful mix of light and shadow. Europe is the homeland of democracy. Some states have a unique and impressive system of social security; some are suffering from economic misery. Europe is beautiful, and it is much more than just a market or a financial zone; it is a cultural complex itself.

**Biographies of the spring 2016 IAJS online seminar presenters:**

**Dr. Joerg Rasche,** Jungian Analyst, trained in Berlin and Zurich (Sandplay Therapy with Dora Kalff) and is a child psychiatrist who works in private practice in Berlin, Germany. He teaches in various Central European countries, and is a training analyst for IAAP.

He served many years as president of the German Jungian association, DGAP, and was vice president of IAAP. Currently, he is president of the German Association for Sandplay Therapy (DGST).

Dr. Rasche has published many papers as well as books on the topics of mythology, music, sandplay therapy, and analytical psychology and is in the board of several journals. His latest book is Europe’s Many Souls, co-edited with Thomas Singer.

He was honored for his engagement for people’s reconciliation in Poland by the Polish president with the Golden Cross of Merit. Also a trained musician, Dr. Rasche gives concert-lectures all over the world.
**Thomas Singer, M.D.** is a psychiatrist and Jungian analyst with a private practice in the San Francisco Bay area. In addition to his clinical work, his professional interests over the past several years have been fourfold:

He has continued to explore the cultural complex theory with colleagues by expanding on the original volume, *The Cultural Complex*, to look at cultural complexes in different parts of the world. This has resulted in *Placing Psyche* (Australia), *Listening to Latin America*, and now *Europe’s Many Souls*. A volume on cultural complexes in Asian countries is in the early stages of development.

Along with Virginia Beane Rutter, Dr. Singer has developed a series of conferences in Santorini, Greece which explore themes about the relationship between Ancient Greece and Modern Psyche. He has co-edited two volumes in the Ancient Greece, Modern Psyche series. A third conference is being planned for late August, 2017.

For the past few decades, Dr. Singer has been actively involved in ARAS (The Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism) which explores symbolic imagery throughout human history in all cultures. He is currently President of National ARAS which has many exciting ongoing projects, including its online site (ARAS Online), its quarterly newsletter (ARAS Connections), its Pioneer Teen Program, the Ekphraxein series of poetry and imagery events in New York, and its bestselling *The Book of Symbols* published by Taschen.

Finally, beginning in 2000, Dr. Singer has helped organize a series of five consecutive Presidential election year conferences at the San Francisco Jung Institute. In October of 2016, the Institute will host "Politics, Culture and Soul in America: A National Conference on the Psychology of the 2016 Presidential Election".

**Biography of the chapter author:**

**Martin Skála** is a Jungian analyst and supervisor who studied psychology at the Charles University in Prague, Czechoslovakia. He is a board member of the Czech Society for Analytical Psychology and a member of the International Association for Analytical Psychology. He also serves as head of Psychopompos, a center of depth psychology in Prague where he lectures and offers workshops.

The IAJS Executive Committee and the presenters look forward to your participation in this exciting and timely seminar.

With warm wishes on behalf of the IAJS Executive Committee,

Marybeth Carter, PhD

Chair, IAJS Online Seminars, IAJS Executive Committee

Co-Chair IAJS 2017 conference in South Africa