

Constitutional Change

(Chapter 4 in *Milestones in the History of Group Analysis*, by Juan Campos)

Some thoughts in reference to the Constitutional Reform 1993

On two occasions, the Group Analytic Society (London) has felt the necessity of publishing a booklet on Aims, Organisation and Activities, whose cover we will reproduce on the following page. In the one issued in 1976, when Foulkes was still alive, the Society was still living happily together with the two other group-analytic institutions, The Institute and Group Analysis: International Panel and Correspondence, charity institutions under the safe umbrella of The Trust for Group Analysis. In the one issued in 1984, The Institute and the Society had become Registered Charities in their own right, The Trust was dissolved the Institute of Family move on its own and GAIPAC, split in two: The Journal and the Bulletin, had returned back under the wings of the Society, where from both originated.

In the editorial of the Bulletin N° 26, of June 1993, their newly appointed editors –Anne Harrow and Sheila Thompson- made this declaration of intentions:

"This edition of this Bulletin is in its familiar format. However, we think that this is an appropriate moment to consider introducing changes. There is a need to reflect the movement that is taking place in the Society, as well as a need to respond to comments and requests to the readers about size and content of the Bulletin. So, watch this space!"

This was not the first time I saw editors aiming at a change of format. The first one was when Harold Behr, the first editor of GAIPAC, an IGA graduate from its Qualifying Course, decided to do so. It was how a chain of events was initiated that led into the Bedford College meeting and, finally GAIPAC, our International Panel and Correspondence, was split in two and later thoroughly eliminated. "Group Analysis, The Journal of Group Analytic Psychotherapy", continued to be a home published 3 times a year journal, edited by Harold Behr until SAGE Publications, a commercial firm took over and Malcolm Pines became its editor from Volume 19/2, June 1986 onwards. "The Bulletin", a 5 times a year handmade Xerox-copied booklet in A5 was edited by Elizabeth Foulkes. It is curious that in the Constitution of the Group Analytic Society no specific provisions are made for the destiny of its official organs of expression.

Constitutional Changes in the GAS

We are at a turning point in the life of the Group Analytic Society. Major amendments to its Constitution are to be decided in the course of this Heidelberg Symposium. The Constitution in a professional society is the legal framework from where an operational network of associated people is suspended. We love to talk about networks in Group Analysis and within our culture the word network has very specific theoretical meanings and the question of boundaries and barriers is of particular importance. A change of framework forcefully changes all relationships between the nodal points in the network and the relation with other networks. These changes become necessary due to the growth or the extension covered by the network. In the Silver Jubilee Issue of Group Analysis: The Journal, T. E. Lear exposes his view of what he calls twenty-five years of the Group-Analytic Society Network. His view, of course, comes from the very hub of the wheel, London. The "projection" of Group Analysis as seen from this point cannot be the same as the one seen from the periphery. In his article he talks about territories, boundaries and finances, and then goes on to tell the story of these last years of expansion.

In the June issue of the Bulletin a very interesting conversation regards the IAGP is recorded. It is striking that at a point in history when within the Group Analytic Society we are doing away with centralization, London is contemplating not only to have the 1998 International Congress of Group Psychotherapy in London but, in the words of Earl Hopper, the President-Elect of that Association, thinks that this way "the [Group Analytic] Society has the chance of being regarded as the spokesman of Group Psychotherapy in the UK". And, he goes on to ask "if we see London as a possible home for the Association with an international secretariat and office."

I can well see how people from London may conceive the IAGP that way. After all, in the inaugural meeting of the London Society, held at 22 Upper Wimpole Street London, W1, on Tuesday 3rd June, 1952, with only six people present, Dr. Foulkes envisioned the forming of such a society to *centralize the work of group analysts wherever it was carried out* (see Notes on the Early Days, (Link with Appendix I, p. 92)). Three years later, on January 31st, 1955, when the decision was taken to enlarge the Society to incorporate students and associates, in the First Annual General Meeting Foulkes, who had already been co-opted as representative of Great Britain to the International Committee of Group Psychotherapy together with Dr. Joshua Bierer, Dr. Henry Ezriel y Dr. T. P. Riess, in his address not only expressed the belief that exponents of any discipline can meet on the common ground of group analysis and that the interdependent cooperation between psychiatrist, psychoanalysts, psychologist, anthropologists, scientists, artists, historians, writers, etc. was one of the features of the Society. At that point the Group Analytic Society (London) had assumed the role of an umbrella organization for the geographical development of the International Association of Group Psychotherapy in the United Kingdom. In this respect, Foulkes was quite convinced that the *Society could influence the national and international situation of group psychotherapy favourably, actually as well as symbolically by its example*. And he was happy to tell the Assembly that "*we have representatives of all different analytical approaches among our members and can thus act as free and fair forum in frank interchange of opinion, approach and observation.*" In this respect he was particularly glad to mention among those Dr. Sutherland and Dr. Ezriel from the Tavistock Clinic. This information was deleted from the excerpted versions later published in News and Views 1962 and more recently again in 1992 in Selected Papers of Foulkes. But these data is of sufficient importance if we want to understand the unknown aspects of our development as is to the Bye-laws that is the rules of the game, of the organizations we are part of.

The model organization from which we all depart is the International Psychoanalytical Association, founded in 1910. In Group Analysis, the senior of all associations, is the Lifwynn Foundation of 1927 and, the junior of all the International Association of Group Psychotherapy which took from 1954 to 1973 to be established. The Group Analytic Society is likely to acknowledge formally its internationality this week. I thought that was an important enough event in the field of psychotherapy as for me to renew my membership and being here at this Symposium in order to have my voice and be able to cast my vote in the Assembly. We received a proposal of amendments (link with p.53 of this dossier) sponsored by the Committee, quoting the Articles which were to be amended. But, I did not know which the last version of the Constitution was. I asked for it and to my surprise I found that it was the one of 1979, which is the year the Trust for Group Analysis had to be dissolved. Strikingly enough that is when I entered the international arena of Group Analysis by writing on June 10th 1979 to the then new editor of GAIPAC, Harold Behr, asking if the time was not ripe for establishing the international association of group analysts Foulkes had envisioned for so many years and where to eventually GAIPAC was aiming.

I thought, maybe it would be of some service to have on hand the Constitutions of the four associations just mentioned. I include the one of the IPA, because it is just the one Robin

Skyner was concerned about when he warned us in 1981 about taking a U-turn back to its limitations. The one of the Lifwynn Foundation I include because, besides being a historical curiosity, it belongs to the only analytical association who consciously and deliberately tried to apply to itself the group the principle "doctor first cure thyself". Finally, I enclose the one of the IAGP, because we are organizationally affiliate to it and it is itself in the process of being amended. Of course, I could have added still those of local group-analytic organizations of which the members of the GAS are individual members, but I did not do so because I feel that the Group Analytic Society should be a society of individuals and not of organizations, as is the case of the IPA, and neither be a society as if it were a group, as is the case of the Lifwynn Foundation. These two extremes have to be well known in order to be aware of their pitfalls. Foulkes' introductory book had as a subtitle "Studies in the social integration of individuals and groups". I think that in order to be coherent with this in practice, no inter-national association is possible or of any good. Back on November 15, 1980, when I summarized the proposal I had made to the Group Analytic Society during the International Congress of Group Psychotherapy in Copenhagen two months before, I expressed the feeling that the sort of association of people and organizations that we should be aiming at should be above nations, if anything transnational, in the same sense that Foulkes spoke of transpersonal communication and interaction within a network. We count with some of our group-analytic colleagues who seem to have accomplished such a task in the European Transcultural Association. But, it is not just a matter of culture or of language that we are facing. The lesson we can learn from the vicious resurgence of nationalism in all of Yugoslavia and the old USSR, and the absolute inadequacy of the international political organizations to be of any help, should be kept in mind when we are aiming at changing things. The enemy is not outside us, the enemy is within us as long as we don't learn to live as what we are, and that is as human-we-beings.

Report of President Bryan Boswood to the AGM Meeting 1993

As its title implies, the Society was founded, more than 40 years ago, as a London Society. Nevertheless the Society now has members in 40 countries. Only 57% of those members live in the United Kingdom.

In recognition of that increasingly international membership the structure of the Society has been gradually changing during the last decade. We first abolished the category of Overseas Membership so that people may be Full Members or associate members regardless or where they live³. We sought to broaden the base of the Society Committee by co-opting members from outside the UK as Corresponding Members.⁴ More recently we have welcomed the election of two Committee members from outside the UK and agreed to pay their expenses to be present at four Committee meetings each year.

In 1992 for the first time a Committee member not resident in the UK was appointed as one of the Honorary Officers of the Society, the Hon. Membership Secretary. In 1993, for the first time, part of the Annual General Meeting will be held outside the UK, in Heidelberg. All the international business of the AGM will be transacted there.

These gradual changes have been achieved through the energy and initiative of a European Working Party, more recently given the status of a Standing Committee answerable directly to the AGM and the President. That Standing Committee has been confronting the Society with possible options for further structural change.

At the AGM last year the mood of the meeting was cautious and more favourably inclined towards further gradual evolution than towards the creation of a new international society. In response to that caution the European Standing Committee has proposed some changes in the

Society's Constitution which recognise and ratify the changes which have already come about and allow their further gradual extension.

The thrust of the proposed constitutional changes is fourfold. They remove the particular link between the Society and the United Kingdom by dropping the word "London" from the Society's title, by enlarging one of the Society's areas of interest from "the National Health Service" to "Public Health Services in different countries", and by spelling out that our activities extend to different cultures and countries. Second, they abolish the special link between the Society and the London Institute of Group Analysis so as to allow equally strong links with comparable institutions in other countries. Such links can be spelt out from time to time through regulations or by-laws. There will be no reference to the London Institute in the proposed amended Constitution. Third, they require the elected membership of the Society Committee to reflect the international membership of the Society as a whole. In present circumstances this would require us to have four elected members on the Committee from outside the United Kingdom, instead of the two we have at the moment. (The main argument when suggested originally in Rome was in favour of democratic equalitarianism, considering that "overseas" regardless of qualification had no right to vote. To that Malcolm Pines agreed quoting the English dictum. "No taxation without representation", subject which is still do be considered for all other categories of members besides Founders and Full.) (The first to be elected was myself, as an ordinary member, and it was not until 1985 that, with Werner Knauss, the concept of Correspondent was introduced).

The European Standing Committee has calculated that the increased cost of travel and hotel expenses of such an arrangement would be about £2000 p.a. That would involve raising membership fees by £4 per member. Fourth, the proposed changes allow Annual General Meetings to be held at any time in each calendar year and require the Committee to take notice of the Society's international events in deciding when and where such meetings will be held.

The present Society Committee voted unanimously at its March meeting to recommend these proposed changes to the AGM. To make them effective, the Society needs a majority of 75% of those voting in person or by proxy. Immediately following the adjournment of the AGM in London in May there would be an opportunity for informal discussion of the proposals. They will formally be discussed at the adjourned AGM in Heidelberg and the vote will be taken there.