

Parlada

Personal notes for Amsterdam

June 1989

I am no newcomer in the field of group therapy, neither its international arena is at all foreign to me. I was already working with small groups as early as 1954. I went for group training with S. H. Foulkes at the Moudsley by 1958 and with Asya Kadis at Louis Wolberg's place, the Postgraduate Center of Mental Health of New York by 1959, where I graduated in 1963 from its "Group Program" in "analytic group psychotherapy". This experience, both of being trained abroad and later of becoming a member of foreign group societies made me very sensitive to the question of internationality. While in America I joined the A.G.P.A. as a student, membership which once back home I maintained as "foreign member" and later as Fellow. Also, once S. H. Foulkes by 1967 initiated G.A.I.P.A.C., I subscribed to his Group Analytic Society (London) as "overseas member" and due to the active part in the development of the European Group Analytic movement I even served as an officer of its Committee of Management.

Couriously enough, being a member of those two organizations for so many years did not help me to get interested in the I.A.G.P., and mind, both have been promoting the Association since the days of the inception of the International Committee and of the Council. At one point in 1976 I was asked to help with the organization of the Madrid congress, but once it was cancelled I never heard anything more about it. It was not until one of its "individual members", Malcolm Pines, as Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the Congress of Copenhagen invited me personally to participate that I became acquainted with the Association. So it happened that at the time the S.E.P.T.G. -the Spanish Society of Group Psychotherapy and Techniques, on which Board of Directors I was serving as Catalan Representative- was considering to associate with foreign associations in order to fulfill its aims and I was delegated to explore on its behalf the conditions offered by the A.G.P.A. and the I.A.G.P. which I did while in Copenhagen. During the Congress there I received an invitation from Dr. Fidler to join as "individual member", an invitation I did not follow until later, when on May 9th, 1983 and I was invited to join its Board of Directors and I had to fulfill that requirement to be included in the election ballot.

I am bringing in this personal experiences in order to illustrate what I feel has been one of the more common sources of misunderstanding in IAGP: the complicated question of individual and organizational membership.

Lay Analysis (The Question of Lay Analysis S.E. XX, pg. 250.)

...Our civilization imposes an almost intolerable pressure on us and calls for a corrective. Is it too fantástic to expect that psychonalysis in spite of its difficulties may be destined to the task of preparing mankind for such a corrective? Perhaps once more an American may hit on the idea of spending a little money to get the "social workers" of this country trained analytically and to turn them into a band of helpers for combating the neurosis of civilization? ¡Aha! a new kind of Salvation Army!

¿Why not? Our imagination always follows patterns. The stream of eager learners who will then flow to Europe will be obliged to by-pass Vienna, for here the development of analysis may have succumbed to a premature trauma of prohibition. ¿You smile? I am not saying this as a bribe for your support. Not in the least. I know you do not believe me; nor I can guarantee what would happen. But one thing I know. It is by no means so important what a decision you give on the question of group analysis. It may have a local effect. But the things that really matter -the possibilities in psychoanalysis for internal development- can never be affected by regulation and prohibitions.