

A Brief History of CSPAP

Czech Society for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (CSPAP) was founded in early 1990's. This historical era was unforgettable for our country as well as for all other Central European states. We got rid of totalitarian political systems, and former communist regime prisoner and dissident Václav Havel became Czechoslovak president. Our country was energized and full of hopes.

Michael Šebek, a well-recognized psychoanalyst, ignited the decisive impulse in our professional community after his London meeting with EFPP's founding member Lydia Tischler. He appealed with his idea to a group of psychotherapists who shared views close to psychoanalytic care for patients as well as to the organization of psychotherapeutic education in public sector.

As for its organization, CSPAP from the very beginning copied EFPP structure. Thus in 1993, three sections came into existence – the Individual Section, the Group Section and the Child and Adolescent Section. Therapists whose experiences differed but who shared enthusiasm for the joint idea formed these sections. Well-established psychoanalysts were among them. There was an undisturbed continuum of psychoanalytic training and education since 1920's and 1930's that involved Otto Fenichel, Emanuel Windholz, or Božidar Dosužkov. Dosužkov was the only one to survive both totalitarian regimes – nazism and communism – and continued training future analysts even during these difficult times. Thanks to him psychoanalysis in our country existed although it was unlawful. It was thanks to him that the Czech Society for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy could be founded shortly after 1989 and be officially invited to associate with IPA. This process was topped at the brake of the century when Czech Psychoanalytic Society became a component member of IPA.

Next to psychoanalysts, candidates of psychoanalysis and group and child therapists also formed the founding group of the Society. Most of them acquired experience in group psychodynamic training which existed – partially illegally – between 1960's and 1980's in free association "SUR" (the letters stand for first letters in surnames of its founders).

Michael Šebek addressed these colleagues and won Marie-Anne Wagtman, Danish group analyst from the Copenhagen Institute for Group Analysis, to conduct the local training group. We were lucky, as Marie-Anne Wagtman had been staying in Prague for 7 years as her husband acted as Chargé d'Affaires for the Kingdom of Denmark in the Czech Republic at that time. The formed group cooperated with IGA Copenhagen from 1994 through 2001. At 2001 the group was recognized as IGA Prague and became EGATIN member.

The Group Section was a bit ahead of other sections, and it was the first one to be in 1999 accepted as an EFPP member. This took place in Munsbach, Luxembourg at the first delegates' meeting that CSPAP participated in.

Training in other sections was taking place simultaneously – Lydia Tischler and Miranda Feuchtwang led training in the Child Section. Seven candidates graduated from the program.

Psychoanalytic Couple and Family Psychotherapy Section was founded after an initial dilemma about its meaningfulness. This section is nowadays among the most dynamically developing ones. In the 1990's, dozens of candidates got involved in training programs and at the break of the century, CSPAP counted at around 100 members and candidates.

Gradually, all sections became EFPP members. Our delegates became fully involved in EFPP activities. In between 2005 and 2009, Luděk Vrba served as one of the coordinators of the EFPP Group Section.

He also took over Lydia Tischler's Subcommittee for Contacts with Central and Eastern European Countries agenda.

EFPP Group Section's conference "Bridging Identities" held in Prague in May 2009 with more than 300 participants has thus far been a certain climax in our Society's history.

CSPAP has been for almost 20 years publishing biannually *The Revue for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*, all issues of which are now available at Psychoanalytic Electronic Publishing (the PEP Web).

After 24 years of its existence, CSPAP is a lively organization. Its sections hold for candidates trainings comprised of self-experience, theory, and supervision. The Society holds actions for concerned professional community; and it is fully integrated into the local psychotherapeutic community and cooperates with related organizations. We are in the process of negotiating the possibility of holding training for therapists who work outside of healthcare.

The Society passed through the years of initial enthusiasm and through much needed consolidation and professionalization, as well as through a crisis that accompanied the alternation of leading positions between founding members and new members/former candidates. We successfully overcame all of the above. Further generational exchange is under way.

Modern history of the Group Section of CSPAP:

Just a few original members formed the Group Section when it was founded. As of 2018, the Section has 65 members (including candidates). Meetings of the Section are held regularly - both training committee meetings and full member and candidate meetings. Except for activities concerning training – such as theory, self-experiential groups, and supervision groups – the Group Section participates in publishing books and papers, as well as in organizing professional activities: i.e. several times a year we take an active role in the Seminars of Psychoanalytic Thinking where case studies are predominantly presented, and we have recently started organizing large groups for all Society members and candidates.

The Spring Group Days, a new local group analytic conference, has in past several years become another integral part of the Group Section; we are currently preparing its third run. The Spring Group Days general theme "How to Experience and Survive a Group" is every year supplemented by a new subtheme: first year's subtheme was "Dependencies in Human Groups", second year's "What are Groups Silent About?" and this year's "Groups and Safety? What does safety stem from, how it oscillates, and what can endanger it?" The conference is open to all helping professions and it is embodied in the life-long learning process for clinical psychologists, medical doctors and nurses. While the first year we had 19 participants, last year we had more than 50 participants - 40% of who took part in the first conference.

Spring Group Days have been inspired by the 2nd GASI International Summer School in Group Analysis "Who is Afraid of Groups?" held in Prague in 2015. The action was organized through a partnership between GASI and the Group Section of CSPAP. The constitutive mover on the Czech side of the partnership was the late Marie Hošková; Czech Group Section kept on organizing a local "Summer School" – the Spring Group Days – in her legacy. The original International Summer School organizers were Regine Scholz, Tija Despotovic, David Glyn, Marie Hošková, Helena Klímová, and Luděk Vrba.

The Group Section has also inspired the foundation of its "sister section" in Slovakia under the auspices of the newly born Slovak Society for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy. This Czech and Slovak

cooperation keeps on developing – the fresh example being joint organization of group analytic training in Slovakia.

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