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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PSYCHOANALYTIC SOCIETIES (IFPS)

The International Federation of Psychoanalytic Societies (IFPS) was founded in Amsterdam on July 30, 1962, by four Societies: the Deutsche Psychoanalytische Gesellschaft e. V. gegründet 1910, the Sociedad Psicoanalitica Mexicana, the Wiener Arbeitskreis für Tiefenpsychologie, and the William Alanson White Psychoanalytic Society.

The main promoter of IFPS was Erich Fromm, who also was the founder of the Mexican Society, had been excommunicated in the United States, and had lost his IPA membership. As a consequence of his many disappointments, Fromm in 1956 began to wish for the creation of a non-bureaucratic psychoanalytic association of all bona fide psychoanalysts, independently from their persuasion.

He found a sympathetic listener in Werner Schwidder, who wished to overcome the post-World War II isolation of the German Psychoanalytic Society (DPG). In Germany, under the Nazi regime, the psychoanalytic terminology had been prohibited in 1938, and the Freudian Group of the Göring Institute became officially nonexistent. After the war the DPG, which had been founded in 1910, was reconstituted anew. In 1950, however, there was a schism: the DPG lost a number of members, who founded the German Psychoanalytic Association (DPV). Apparently, the reason for the psychoanalytic war was the question of loyalty to the Freudian psychoanalytic principles: under Müller Braunschweig, the DPV accused Felix Böhm and the disciples of Schultz-Hencke in the DPG of having sold out to the Nazi ideology by rejecting integral Freudian tenets. In 1951 the DPV was admitted to the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA), while the application of the DPG was rejected because of its deviant psychoanalytic conception (Schultz-Hencke's contributions). When Schwidder succeeded Böhm, he tried to establish international contact. Fromm encouraged him to contact the William Alanson White Society in New York, and Schwidder, hoping for an alliance supportive of analytic "freedom of speech," pointed out in a letter to the White Society that Schultz-Hencke's work had preceded the Hitler's era.

A first open international psychoanalytic meeting took place in Amsterdam in the summer of 1960, a second one in Düsseldorf in 1961, and a year later the First International Forum of Psychoanalysis was held in Amsterdam, on the subject "Present Day Trends in Psychoanalytic Theory and Practice." A

number of prominent analysts had agreed to participate at the Forum, among them Franz Alexander, Herbert Binswanger, Medard Boss, Igor Caruso, Erich Fromm, Martin Grotjahn, René Laforgue, Jack Millet, Sándor Rádo, Raoul Schindler, René Spitz, Edith Weigert, and many others. On this occasion a new “Arbeitsgemeinschaft” for promoting a free discussion of psychoanalytic theory and practice, later named IFPS, was founded at a meeting between Igor Caruso, Erich Fromm, Werner Schwidder, and Gerard Chrzanowski. Sándor Rádo, representing the American Academy of Psychoanalysis and its medical psychoanalysts policy only, withdrew from participation in the organization of the federation.

According to the Statutes, “the IFPS is committed to the concept of pluralism in psychoanalytic theory and practice as well as to the interdisciplinary exchange in matters of micro- and macro- social interest.” Since 1962, the Forum has been held every four years. In nearly four decades, the IFPS organized 18 international meetings (10 fora and 8 conferences), and the member societies have risen to 22, all from Europe and America, representing about 2,000 psychoanalysts. The minimum requirement for being admitted is a regular training, consisting of three years of theoretical and clinical psychoanalytic instruction (after a full course of studies in medicine or psychology), a personal analysis (three sessions per week), and supervised psychoanalytic sessions with two different supervisors. In 1992, the International Forum of Psychoanalysis, a quarterly journal promoted and supported by the IFPS, began to be published, and in 1996 the IFPS Archives for the history of psychoanalysis were established.

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