

# In memoriam Ivana Marková (1938–2024)

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## Abstract

A powerful voice in our community faded out on December 1st, 2024. It is with deep sadness that we acknowledge the death of Professor Ivana Marková, aged 86. Ivana Marková developed an unique, inspiring, dialogical perspective in social and cultural psychology; she saw dialogism as an ontology, an epistemology and ethics. She also lived dialogism: a life of rich long-term dialogues with so many friends and colleagues all over the world. Ivana Marková was an Associate Editor of Culture & Psychology. She was a visiting professor in many universities, gave keynote addresses in numerous countries, and was a mentor to generations of social psychologists. Ivana Marková will be missed by many academic and professional communities around the world. We have lost a unique personality, a paradigm-challenger, a mentor, and a friend.

## Keywords

Ivana Markova, ontology, dialogism, social representations, dialogical case studies

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Ivana Marková was Professor Emerita of the University of Stirling (UK), visiting professor at the London School of Economics, Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and Fellow of the British Academy, as well as a Senior Member of Wolfson College (Cambridge, UK). She was awarded two Honorary Doctorates, from the University of Linköping (Sweden), and from the University of Neuchâtel (Switzerland).

Born in Tabor, in Czechoslovakia in 1938, Ivana was assigned by the communist party to work as a technician in a chemical plant. Not allowed to study full-time, she was an external student at Charles University in Prague, earning her doctorate in 1964. At the time of the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, she was doing a postdoc at the University of Cambridge. She was forced to relocate her young family to England, and took another postdoc at the University of London. She was subsequently appointed lecturer and then professor at the University of Stirling. From there she became a leader of social psychology in Europe. She developed long-term networks on issues such as social representations, trust, and dialogical dynamics. She also held long-standing associations with the Maison des Sciences de L'Homme and the London School of Economics.

Rooted in the Czech linguistic tradition, Ivana developed a dialogical approach to social psychology. She argued for the primacy of social and ethical relationships, viewing relations as an open-ended dialogue, in which respect and responsibility are crucial. She was especially attuned to the tensions that could arise due to contradictory commitments (e.g., to family and an institution). With a deep scholarly foundation in Hegel, Herder, and Bakhtin, she made paradigmatic contributions to the study of language, human awareness, social representations, trust, the dialogical mind, and the history of social psychology.

Ivana Marková is author of a series of theoretical monographs and edited volumes that are landmarks in social sciences. Her personal reflections moved from a theory of language (Marková, 1978, 1982) to a theory of dialogue (Marková et al., 1995; Marková & Foppa, 1990, 1991), and then to a theorisation of social representation from a dialogical perspective (Marková, 2003), which she pursued in a series of inspiring papers (Marková, 2000, 2006). Her 2016 book anchors dialogism in the history of philosophy and social sciences, and defines it as an ontology, an epistemology and an ethics (Marková, 2016). In 2023, she revised the theory of social representation as a theory of social knowledge, opening the field to new studies of current societal transformations (Marková, 2023).

In dialogue with others, she systematically explored the role of focus groups in social psychology (Marková et al., 2007), the constitution of dialogical case studies (Marková et al., 2020), the importance of trust in social relations (Marková & Gillespie, 2008, 2011), and more generally, the history of dialogical theories (Marková, 2018b, 2021, 2022; Marková et al., 2022; Moscovici & Marková, 2006).

In her empirical work, Ivana Marková addressed key social issues. In the domain of health, she studied public understandings of AIDS in the 1980s (Marková & Farr, 1995), then haemophilia, and the social representations of and communication with the death and blind (Marková, 2017). She studied the changing representations of democracy in post-Soviet countries in the 1990s (Marková, 2001; Markova, 2004; Moodie et al., 1995), trust in contemporary institutions in the 2000s, and more recently, the challenges posed by the

bureaucratization of public services and the return of authoritarian regimes (Marková, 2008; 2018a).

In all these contributions, and so many others, she combined the highest level of scholarship with humility and a sensitivity to the complexities of human life. She had developed profound insights into human nature, born out of her first-hand experience of revolutions and crises, but was always attentive to the ideas of others.

Ivana Marková was an Associate Editor of *Culture & Psychology*. She was a visiting professor in many universities, gave keynote addresses in numerous countries, and was a mentor to generations of social psychologists. Ivana Marková will be missed by many academic and professional communities around the world. We have lost a unique personality, a paradigm-challenger, a mentor, and a friend.

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