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**Psychoanalysis of the couple and the family:
facing the catastrophes of our time**

Introduction to the issue “Psychoanalysis of the couple and the family: facing the catastrophes of our time”

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The catastrophes that are increasingly affecting the contemporary world, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, wars, forced migrations and climate change, put the psychic functioning of individuals, couples and families to the test. They push individuals, and the groups in which they are involved, to discover unexpected resources in responding. Yet some find themselves seriously damaged by these unprecedented crises. What have been and could be our responses to help such couples and families in these circumstances? What technical tools might we draw on to support the complex work of couple and family psychoanalysis? We know that one pathway has been the use of technologies that were previously uncommon in therapy, such as videoconsultation and the telephone. What reflections do we have about such changes?

These ongoing disasters have also affected the psyches of caregivers. What can we say about the circumstances in which analyst(s) and patient(s) find themselves – worlds that are “superimposed” (Puget and Wender, 1982) – in which they share an

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external reality that is traumatic in nature? In the analytic field, phenomena occur that can induce distortions and transformations in listening, and, more generally, in the analytic process itself.

Collective traumas put to the test, and even short-circuit, structuring alliances, contracts and pacts, which are no longer able to guarantee the elementary security of subjects or their trust in links and institutions. This undermines the very capacity to think (Kaës, 2020). Strongly challenged by these adversities, analysts are stimulated to adjust their therapeutic approach and open up new paths in the psychoanalytical field.

This issue of the Review is inaugurated by René Kaës' article, "Notes sur les espaces de la réalité psychique et le malêtre en temps de pandémie¹". In it, the author introduces some reflections on the impact of the pandemic on three main spaces of psychic reality: intrapsychic space, intersubjective space and the space of plurisubjective ensembles. A constant assertion underlies and guides this text: an ill-being in contemporary culture. The article introduces and contextualises the clinical analyses and theoretical reflections subsequently presented in this issue.

The article by Massimiliano Sommantico and Elena Longo, "Transitions multiples et aménagement du cadre", addresses the multiple changes in the care and follow-up of a distressed family: the request for gender reassignment by one of the daughters; the transition from a hospital consultation to therapy in private practice; and the move from face-to-face consultations to online psychotherapy necessitated by the pandemic of COVID-19. The authors pay particular attention to the transgenerational roots of family suffering.

Also in the realm of psychoanalytical family therapy, Rodrigo Manoel Giovanetti and Fernanda Zanetti Cinalli Giovanetti introduce a technical innovation. Their text, "Family therapeutic consultations in contemporary times: therapeutic mediations with video games in public health care services", aims to systematise an experiment extending psychoanalysis, through mediation by video games. This experiment took place within the framework of family therapy consultations for children presenting psychological distress in a public health service.

Anne Boisseuil's article, "Effets de présence chez l'adolescent dans sa famille confinée, transformation des espaces communs et privés", written from the perspective of a clinic for adolescents before, during and after lockdown, examines the effects of being confined with other family members. The author hypothesises that a regressive movement mobilises the adolescent to re-enter shared spaces within the home and family.

The IACFP research group led by Irma Morosini reflects on three axes of analysis in their article "Atravesamientos espacio-temporales en el impacto psico-físico y social de la pandemia en el mundo": the effects on patients and therapists of the pandemic;

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the emergence of specific symptoms triggering a desire to live in the unprecedented situation they represent; the implementation of new theoretical and technical resources operating in the face of trauma and violence.

In their text “The uncertain is our future”, Elisabetta d’Amico and her colleagues ask, to what extent it is possible to cope with emergency situations such as a pandemic or war, and the consequences of living with uncertainty both for patients and their therapists. This has especial relevance given the eruption of external reality within the clinical process, and its repercussion on the intrapsychic and interpersonal dimension of couple and family ties.

More general and speculative is Alejandro Klein’s article, “Notas sobre la constitucion de subjetividades emergentes”, which describes the main features of contemporary society that he has identified in the literature, features to which he subscribes. He focuses upon an evolving culture of confusion about and misplacement of frameworks contained within the social contract, which result in policies that are confusing and overwhelming in the absence of traditional forms of subjectivity based on the concept of psychic apparatus. He attempts to identify ongoing changes that mark contemporary subjectivity and its vicissitudes.

Two book reviews follow. The first, by Édith Lecourt, reviews *Les apports de René Kaës à la psychanalyse de couple et de famille* (Chronique Sociale, Lyon, 2022), edited by Rosa Jaitin. In this book, thirteen psychoanalysts and couple/family clinicians from different countries discuss key contributions of René Kaës, such as the Group Psychic Apparatus, unconscious alliances, phoric functions, mediations, filiation processes, the fraternal complex, transmission processes in psychic life, dreams, malaise, and, more general group processes that underlie the theory and practice of couple and family psychoanalysis.

The second, by Didier Pilorge, reviews *Construire, écrire et lire un article en psychologie* (InPress, Paris, 2022), the product of the Conférence des Publications de Psychologie en Langue Française (CPPLF), jointly directed by Virginie Althaus, Christian Ballouard, Anne Loncan, Hélène Maire, Philippe Robert and André Sirota. The authors address the different phases and elaborations of scientific writing in psychology from their perspectives as clinicians, teacher-researchers, journal managers, disseminators and reviewers. Amongst other things, the book offers reflections on the desire to write and publish, and the evaluation of manuscripts from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective. It also addresses the controversial issue of the impact factor and uses made of it.

As usual, the issue concludes with the table of contents of the latest issue of the journal *Couple and Family Psychoanalysis*.

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