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Family as a transformative tool

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Summary

Family is claimed to be a key structure in the processing of alterity and continuity, which are both basilar needs and main challenges for human beings: this results into its unstable balance and ever-changing form. The analytical work with a woman involved in a homosexual tie and mother of a child illustrates feasible creative transformations of the family structure which can offer fresh solutions to traumatic losses and migration ruptures, overcoming the alternative between a deadly repetition and a terrifying strangeness. Due to the family boundary position, between internal and external, individual and group reality, clinical work with such issues privileges working on boundaries, countertransference and the groupal functioning of the psyche.

Keywords: alterity, boundary, family, groupal functioning, transformation.

Résumé. *La famille considérée comme instrument transformatif*

La famille est considérée comme une structure essentielle pour la constitution de l'altérité et de la

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continuité, qui sont des besoins et des enjeux fondamentaux pour l'être humain: d'où il en découle son équilibre instable et sa forme en constante mutation. Le travail analytique avec une femme impliquée dans un lien homosexuel et mère d'un enfant montre des possibles réalisations créatives de la structure familiale qui peut offrir des nouvelles solutions à des pertes traumatiques et à des séparations dues à la migration, en dépassant l'alternative entre une répétition mortifère et une étrangeté terrifiante. A cause de la position de limite de la famille, entre interne et externe, entre réalité individuelle et groupale, le travail clinique avec lesdites caractéristiques, privilégiera le travail sur les limites, sur le contre-transfert et sur le fonctionnement groupal de la psyché.

Mots-clés: altérité, famille, fonctionnement groupal, limite, transformation.

Resumen. *La familia como instrumento de transformación*

La Familia es llamada a ser la estructura clave en el proceso de alteridad y continuidad, ambos elementos necesarios y basilares en los principales desafíos de los seres humanos: lo que comporta como resultado un equilibrio poco estable y susceptible de continuos cambios de forma. El trabajo analítico con una mujer involucrada en una relación homosexual y madre de un pequeño ilustra las transformaciones creativas factibles de la estructura familiar en las cuales pueden ofrecerse nuevas soluciones a las pérdidas traumáticas y a las rupturas migratorias, que acontecen como la alternativa a una repetición mortífera y a un extrañamiento aterrador. Dados los límites de la posición familiar entre el externo e interno, entre realidad individual y realidad grupal, el trabajo clínico con tales temas privilegia el trabajo sobre los límites, la controtransferencia y el funcionamiento grupal de la mente.

Palabras clave: alteridad, familia, límite, trabajo sobre los límites, transformación.

The family is often considered as an essential means of handing down and transmitting cultures, traditions, histories and personal traits, therefore as an element of continuity and stability, qualities the individual needs in order to develop and thrive. From a political standpoint, this idea has led in the past decades to ideological movements against the family, viewed as an institution instrumental to the reproduction of the social and political order, with the aim of supporting a reactionary and locked up approach to life and the world. In 1914 Freud described the reproductive goal of breeding as narcissistic: parents expect their offspring to fulfil all the wishes they have given up. Moreover, they narcissistically invest their children and view them as either what they are themselves, or the child they were, the child they would have liked to be, or the parental object who was once part of themselves (they once internalised).

All this, together with the Super-ego function of transmitting parents' or, more accurately, grandparents' moral standards, values and ideals, strongly works towards the preservation of continuity. However, an unavoidable element of heterogeneity lies at the

very foundation of the family, in the exogamic sexual encounter between individuals descending from different lineages. Moreover, we must be aware that cultures, which supposedly need the family and social institutions in order to reproduce themselves, are structures which can neither be consistently expressed in the same way and to the same extent by all the participating individuals, nor undergo transformations only as an effect of the impact of external, imposed events. History and cultures keep changing and moving on. In present times the extensive circulation of people, objects and techniques makes heterogeneity a rule, to which we cannot but give thorough consideration.

My idea is that from a historical, sociological, biological and psychological viewpoint, the family is a key structure in the processing of change and continuity, which are both basic needs and main challenges for human beings. The unfolding of a new existence occurs and develops at the intersection between diversity and otherness on the one hand, and the narcissistic human need for sameness and continuity, on the other. Family is the main spatiotemporal setting where all these processes develop, and where either the opposition or the intertwining of continuity and otherness is worked through: its basic function is to generate new lives, which means reproducing the past in the future but also being rooted in alterity. From a biological point of view, not only does reproduction require the participation of two different sex cells, but meiotic cellular division differs from mitosis also due to the substantial crossing over of genetic material between two diverse chromosome complements, leading to completely unforeseeable features in the ensuing individuals: a hint at thirdness and Oedipus which develops since conception?

The condition of *neoteny*, which in the human offspring extends in time the state of *hilflosigkeit* and dependence on the caregivers, allows a major transmission of psychological and cultural nuclear components from parents to children. On the one hand, it implies that many functions, both biological and psychological, are exercised by the caregivers in order to protect the continuity from intrauterine to external world; thus the unfolding of a new psycho-somatic life is allowed, and the unavoidable pain of growing is contained: as far as psychological functions are concerned, we can rely on many different formulations such as the protective shield against stimuli (Freud 1920), auxiliary ego, holding, reverie, alpha-function, mother-infant skin-ego, word-bearer... On the other hand, through all these activities a significant amount of otherness flows from one generation to the other. Depending on the amount of psychical work these heterogeneous elements have achieved or the quality of their translation, they can either participate in the building of the individual unconscious and the introduction of the subject into the intergenerational chain, or crystallize into un-metabolized remnants which cannot enter the representational processes and, thus, enrich the conscious-unconscious dynamic, but just reproduce themselves as irreducible triggers of psycho-somatic pain and pathology.

Recent psychoanalytical theories (e.g. Laplanche's generalized seduction theory) underline the fundamental function of the other in the humanization process, which requires the addition, by a sexuated adult, of a drive kernel to the instinctual, biological being who has just appeared in the world. Moreover, they support the idea of an inter-subjective unconscious that organizes groups, as well as families, through unconscious

links (e.g. Aulagnier's narcissistic contract and Kaës's unconscious alliances): here the otherness results from both the plurality of involved subjects and the alterity inherent in the unconscious. Even in a "classical" psychoanalytical frame of reference, the Oedipus complex itself, which is the basis the family is built upon, upsets the dyadic psychic functioning by introducing a third element, leading to personality structuring processes of both identification and dis-identification, i.e., the whole range from continuity to discontinuity.

The family, as the biological, psychological, social and historic structure within which humans reproduce themselves, has intrinsically got the impossible task of combining such opposite tendencies, which results in its unstable balance and ever-changing form. Family histories are inexhaustible sources of different solutions to the otherness-sameness opposition, which can span through an extended range of socially and historically specific configurations. Migrations and multi-ethnicity, divorces and new marriages leading to reconstructed families, adoptions and particularly international adoptions, assisted reproduction technologies, single parent and homosexual families are only some of these solutions, not all as new as they might appear. They are certainly expressions of the specific instability of the family system, which should be viewed as society's processing organ of change, because of its position on the border between internal and external, individual and group reality: a primary culture transformer, which issues and supports subjectivation processes and their new logics due to transformations of socio-cultural containers.

The family is not a natural datum, but has an inherent historical relativity (Chianese, 2008). The mononuclear family, for example, with its isolation, is a recent invention. Moreover, when we adopt a wider vantage point, which we can define as anthropological, we witness substantial changes of behaviour, sociality and thinking in humans all over the world, that are particularly striking when we observe one specific culture at a time, like Western culture. It is impossible to cover the enormous amount of literature on the topic, but I would like to make some minor comments on the basic dimensions of space and time, which heavily impinge upon human reality and, more specifically, upon the family structure and functions, all the more due to their rapid evolution. Space and time are two constitutive and characterizing elements of the family, which is expected to occupy a specific place, home, with its physical and metaphorical meanings, also related to its social context, while its members, throughout their lives, stand in and move to specific positions and distances each in relation to the others. Time is another main organizer of the family, as well as of subjectivity: the family is rooted in its ancestors' history, so that it develops a history of its own, which is projected on to the future, in the form of narratives, expectations, tasks, rites, myths, destiny and openings; moreover, time is personified by the kinship ties inside the family, denoting the flow of time and giving a direction to the exchanges of nutrition, affect, education, authority, identification and so on.

“My life is very complicated”

Noa introduces herself as a person with a very complicated life. She has a large and imposing family, whose far away origins she does not betray by language syntax or accent, since she moved to Italy when she was a tiny baby: it is the rhythmic quality and fluency of her speech which strike me and conflict with my own timing of verbal interventions and management of the beginning and ending of sessions.

Migration is part and parcel of her family idiom, and has resulted in a large and complex network of close relatives who have settled in many different countries and continents, where they all play leading positions in the cultural field. From this protective distance, they keep very warm relationships and bear conflicts without ruptures. Even divorces and illnesses do not lead to drastic separations and wounds, with links and living spaces rearranged in fresh configurations which can fit better the changed needs and relationships.

The starting point of this analysis is Noa's reporting of her mother's death when she was four, elliptically attributed to a cardiac arrest, the cause of which she cannot explain. Indeed, everything that might have happened before is obliterated, as if it never existed. Therefore, Noa's life appears to be marked not only by this premature loss and the inherent void, but by the lack of an experiencing and historicizing Ego from birth up to the age of four, as if a retrograde amnesia had occurred. From then on, a tender and sensitive father, together with an elder brother, would be her life companions, with the initial support of young baby-sitters. Noa made very strong attachment relationships with these figures, although she cannot say they were particularly devoted and affectionate, as they often changed. Eventually, in her preadolescence, she lost her last baby-sitter, moved with her family to settle in a distant city, and took over the home management; she painfully missed the reassuring feeling of finding someone at home when coming back from school, and a freshly prepared meal just for her. Noa felt terribly unlucky as compared with same age children and also viewed herself as horribly unattractive, therefore she remembers these years as very hard and sorrowful.

Her father's second marriage followed, and then more siblings, only to end with a devastating divorce, with a very difficult position for Noa, who was at the time very fond of her mother substitute, but also had a different relationship with her than her brother and half-siblings. There would be three marriages in all for her father, as well as three analyses for Noa; her life is rooted in more than one original family and country, and is written in several, different languages. On the other hand, it opens up and develops into a new type of family which had never been seen among her ancestors.

Noa begins her analysis, after two previous experiences, one of group analysis and the other of individual psychotherapy, in the wake of the birth of her son Leo, achieved abroad through a IAD procedure, which her female companion has supported. One more reason for seeking help is that Leo is now approaching Noa's age when her mother died. Both the relationship with her child and the analytical one trigger a disturbing feeling of dependence, which is particularly unwelcome because it is precisely what she could never afford to experience through her childhood and adolescence. She feels that receiving something is tantamount to lacking something, so she always acts as a very “rich” person, who can give affection and support to many different people. However, after the analysis has begun, she realizes how many relationships thrive only because she puts so much effort into keeping them alive: when at this point she tries to do less, many people disappear, to her great, unexpected relief. Something similar happens in analysis, where she expects herself to do everything, to arrive on time and not to miss a single session, until, due to family obligations, she has to spend a week abroad; but at

this point she is able to ask me to make the effort to find a way of allowing her to replace the missed sessions, and consequently she enjoys two weeks with daily sessions, preceding and following the absence.

After the initial few sessions, marked by intense emotions stirred up by the narrative of her life, Noa is ready to tell me her first analytic dream:

“I am in a group of young female colleagues, and we are given a task, which is unclear, though. I feel it is extremely difficult, all the more because I am not told how to work out a solution. Then I am given a list of objects, both in a written and image form: a pair of shoes, a blue, flapping curtain... I am expected to make a list of them, and I think up to list them by singing: I sing beautifully, the others appreciate this and say it is original. However, after a while, both the colleagues and the managers get distracted, and I feel frustrated”.

At first glance, there are clear references to the new analytic situation, felt as anxiety-provoking because scarcely structured, with too much space for free expression: yet she is able to use it creatively, although, at the same time, there is a question as to whether I can see things through her eyes. I am struck by her representation of herself as a member of a group: according to Noa's associations, it may represent a sibling group, whose appreciation she needs to attract, and from which she wishes to differentiate, but not to the point of no longer being in their thoughts. Is this also an allusion to a depressed mother, who was not able to sustain her attention for her own baby girl? Instead, we have a female group, where she finds that enthusiastic, mirroring gaze, or rather, listening¹, which she always missed: thus she dares to express her expectation that the analysis, through my attentive and reliable presence, gaze, and listening, will allow her to make use of a transitional dimension without feeling anxious and guilty, as it is often the case with her son. Her own family too is a creative solution she found in order to work out so many issues related to her original links: a narcissistic hyper-compensation for herself, through building a family with two mothers, after so many failed attachments to the female figures who supported her father as mother surrogates or love objects; but also a protection from an unbarred strong Oedipal relationship with her father, acted through repeatedly falling in love with her admired brother's male friends, though never accomplishing a satisfying couple relationship: her homosexual choice spares her from incestuous desires, allowing at the same time the unbearable phantasy of being the one who can give her father the son he deserves.

A lively relationship between father and mother is what Noa could never enjoy in her life: her father is a very creative person, an artist in fact, and probably her mother was very creative too, according to the limited information she has about her. However, they cannot be together in her mind, neither can they constitute a generative couple. The mother is poorly represented, being felt as a sheer lack, a void that cannot be filled in order not to feel the pain of the absence: Noa does not know her mother's birth date, the day when she died, how old she was; temporal referents are all obliterated, while spatial ones point out to the alien nature of other continents and cultures. Birth and death seem to be collapsed into one in Noa's mind, leading me to the burdening feeling that a secret must be buried somewhere in all these empty spaces, and often the idea of a suicide peeps out in my thoughts. Repeated unsuccessful substitutions (father's partners, baby-sitters)

¹ The relevance of sound and listening for the primal psychic processes lies both in their function of producing memories and experiences which date back to intra-uterine life, therefore much earlier than vision, and in their tridimensionality and rhythmic quality, which allow the creation of a space for proto-symbolic activities. Moreover, the vibratory quality of sounds and voices implies a contact dimension leading to the building of a sound envelope, a precursor of a skin-self.

underlined, if needed, the impossibility, shared by father and daughter, to work through the loss. It must remain silent, and this silence or secret keeping risks being handed down to the young Leo, whose impossible generation seems not to find the words to be spoken. According to Francesconi (2008), when roles and functions are not clearly discernable in the adult model, the present tends to become a summation of instants, and time does not unfold; integration of differences is not attainable through ambivalence, and archaic divalence becomes a way of assuming inconsistencies without conflict through ambiguity. This may be only partially Noa's situation, since her father is a passionate and lively person, who always involved his children in his activities and passions, and in relationships with people he loved; however, he couldn't really welcome and respond to his daughter's needs, particularly of a maternal gaze which could reflect to her the beautiful girl she was, which she only later discovered by looking at photos, instead of the ugly and slovenly child she had felt to be². "I always thought: should my mother have been there with me, everything would have been different!": she means also a mother who could enjoy supporting her unfolding femininity.

Group processing of primal scene and Oedipal contents

Recently I had a very strange experience. I was preparing a lecture about parenthood, so I went through Gaddini's seminal paper on formation of the father and the primal scene process. The following day, a young male patient about thirty years old describes to me his efforts, during a working weekend, to be unfaithful to his girlfriend (as his father was with my patient's mother, eventually leaving the family). Afterwards, a couple brings into the session a strong shared phantasy about an other man who is felt as a threat for the marital link; then, Noa arrives, and reports the following dream:

"It was during my University years, when I shared an apartment with two sisters. In the first part of the dream, I am sleeping in the same bed with the younger sister and her fiancé, which annoys me a lot. I fear they will have sexual intercourse while I am in the same bed. Later I see this girl alone, her boyfriend isn't there anymore, and she is pregnant. I feel I took part in this situation, and I am shocked. In the second part, I am in the kitchen with the older sister, who was in reality my real friend, and she asks me to tell her when I intend to leave the apartment. I feel forced, urged, but I decide to hurry up and leave. Then I enter my room and a swarm of bumble-bees or horseflies attacks me, coming out from under the eiderdown. I fear they are going to sting me, and I think it is time to go. But I feel an excruciating pain, a sense of nostalgia, of mourning, as if I am realizing I will never come back there".

After Noa leaves, a young patient, who is training as a psychologist, tells me that she dreamt of her former fiancé, with his present girlfriend, who was once her friend and co-

² Winnicott writes that the mother gazes at the baby in her arms, and the baby gazes at his mother's face and finds himself therein...provided that the mother is really looking at the unique, small, helpless being and not projecting her own expectations, fears, and plans for the child. In that case, the child would find not himself in his mother's face, but rather the mother's own projections. This child would remain without a mirror, and for the rest of his life would be seeking this mirror in vain.

tenant. Another patient, who in her early adolescence was abused by her father, reports a dream in which she was sleeping in her parents' bed while they were having intercourse; by the end of my working day a couple comes, whose preschool son voices their oedipal dynamics. The following day a patient who had temporarily interrupted her psychotherapy returns: she immediately requires one more weekly session (from two to three), because of a violent anxiety attack after she dreamt, during the gap without therapy, of having intercourse with her father and being frightened that she might be pregnant. Again, as in Noa's first dream, we run upon a group, and I feel deeply uncomfortable being the mainstay of group thoughts and phantasies: almost the whole family of my patients is moved by primal scene dynamics, which Noa develops in a twofold oedipal and pre-oedipal scene.

Noa shares her bed with a couple having sex and procreating, therefore a generative couple, but she also finds in it threatening bumble-bees, that push her to move and look for a new place, which would be safe from incest phantasies. The bumble-bees may represent for Noa the Bionian not-breast, which is not limited to an absence, but is indeed a malignant presence: its nipple, instead of pouring out the good milk, becomes an injuring sting which sucks away creativity. However, although leaving is felt as intensely painful, due to the belief in the impossibility of ever coming home, nostalgia allows her to save a strong affective link with her past. This is an important transformation of Noa's attitude towards separations, which at the beginning of the analysis were felt as irrecoverable ruptures and losses, and were expressed through her distinctive prosody: vowels were prolonged and there were no pauses, making me feel I was perpetrating a violent intrusion when saying something or ending a session.

The group dynamics stirred up in my office express a very active group dimension in Noa's life and analysis, where references to the family group, the colleagues group, the friends group always have a central place, showing that her identificatory project cannot do without the group. According to Aulagnier, the subject's identificatory project, which needs the group's support, allows the Ego to wish for what by nature it would like to avoid: change. This implies that in the identification process there is an aspect rooted in the past, that is, the precipitates of past object relationships, as well as a forward narcissistic trend, fuelled by the hope that in the future the gap between what the Ego is and the ideal it wishes to become will be cancelled (Aulagnier, 1975). This temporal link between past and future produces the unceasing transformative movement which characterizes also the family Ego, which undergoes a similar identificatory process made of precipitates of past family networks and a push towards a different, ideal organisation, through the elaboration of both individual and groupal psychic (e. g. separation, Oedipus) processes, experiences and relationships.

Noa, whose life is rooted in a family history of painful losses and ruptures, as well as reiterated introductions of strange and unknown elements and relationships, is using the family as a processor of many different and changing experiences. In the transference relationship separation anxieties and the quest for undifferentiated, primal contact with the object have been superseded in time by a prevalence of mourning work and history building. Also in countertransference I had to work hard in order to transform my

theories and feelings towards so-called “new families”, and particularly heterologous procreation in a homosexual couple. I also have been allowed to follow the development of Noa’s son, a toddler with minor social difficulties, but very good at differentiating his relationship with each of his parents.

Reality and primal phantasies, secrets and questions

What kind of primal scene will feed the phantasmatic life of a child with two mothers (although he appears not to consider them as equivalent at all) and born from a sophisticated laboratory procedure whereby two different sex gametes were matched together outside a human body? Is the parents’ desire, enriched by intergenerational cathexes, sufficient to provide the basis for the child to build his own primal phantasies? According to Sylvie Faure-Pragier’s (2008) considerations about IAD procreation, the only condition for a child to undergo a balanced development is to have two parents who love each other and devote themselves to him/her, no matter whether they are different or same sex. The importance of sexual differences in the constitution of a symbolic order, together with generation differences, is not necessarily obliterated when there is no such real difference within a singular parents-child relationship. On the other hand, we know that children’s sex theories are poorly affected by adults’ explanations, and are mainly nourished by unconscious phantasies. Moreover, since the symbolic is better conceived as a process, rather than an order, it can be reshaped and affected by change and history. The question in heterologous insemination of whether and what the child is to be told arouses much anxiety. This is probably due, among other reasons, to the threat that a self-generating fantasy, inherent to primal processes, will endure in spite of the functioning of primary and secondary processes, thereby setting up a psychotic core in the personality. We know since Ferenczi’s work that avoidance of the truth, as well as its denial, is traumatic in itself, and its real aim is to protect the adults at the children’s expense. We also know how noxious the effects of a family secret can be, even worsening in the following generations. As psychoanalysts, we should give less importance to the concrete reality of conception, supporting our patients’ unconscious processes and creative power of phantasmatic life. Even in situations where a sound medical manipulation on germinal cells seems to have upset the natural course of events, parental desires are still there, with all their unconscious qualities and the urge for the child to translate them. According to Faure-Pragier, phantasies, which stem from individual psychic unconscious truth rather than from historic reality, play a basic function as intermediaries between reality and symbolic thought.

In recent months, a turning point has come in Noa’s analysis: memories of her early childhood have come to light, with Leo taking up the function of putting fragments together: in one instance he can look at photos where my patient is with her mother or, in another one, after learning from my patient that her mother used to tell stories to her and her brother, he breaks into an amazed laugh, and asks: “how is it possible? Did you live in the same house?” Noa underlines how difficult it is to find words to talk about painful

and inexplicable matters, because her child self is unprepared to confront death, which now comes out through Leo and her own child pupils: finally the phantasy emerges that her mother died because she was nasty (again the not-breast?), a mother either intrusive or unable to see her. In her mind she can now link the idealized memories of experiences and relationships pertaining to a lively cultural and artistic environment, shared with her father and her brother, and the unbearable anxieties of separation and rupture, always looming over her most valued relationships. For the first time she becomes aware of her own value for others and gets over the belief that her affection towards people is always by far bigger than theirs. Questions begin to be welcomed, just like in the last dream her friend asking her about her plans to move: there is room both for Leo's curiosities about his generation and family, and for her own quest for answers about her being left by her mother. The question of why Noa couldn't keep her mother alive can now be verbalized, and she begins to recognize dependency needs and to make use of the supporting qualities of her partner.

Noa and her partner are developing a listening attitude towards Leo's unspoken questions about his origin, while containing his anxieties and working out possible answers. Secrets and unspoken issues rooted at the origins of her family are surfacing, such as her mother's symbiotic link with her own overly affectionate mother from whom she was torn away when she emigrated because of Noa's father's conflict with his own cold and distancing mother. A newly experienced nostalgia is weaving temporal ties between an either idealized or mute past and a still lively family structure which has expanded through Europe, yet enjoys repeated gatherings around creative and cultural events. While Leo is getting rid of the function he was assigned of giving solutions to unrepresentable ruptures and being allowed to ask questions and receive up-to-date answers, a bidirectional movement between past and present allows the future to develop and create new unforeseeable solutions and integrations between sameness and otherness.

Concluding remarks

"New family" models run the risk of being used to avoid mourning unbearably painful experiences, through a sharp cutting off of links and obliteration of the past in order to achieve a metamorphosis which overcomes limits and omnipotently controls the future. However, Noa's history and analysis show how the family can undergo a creative transformation which allows a reshaping of affective nets and a working out of fresh solutions to the alternative between a deadly repetition and a terrifying strangeness. In psychoanalysis, a parallel work on countertransference is needed in order to adapt our private and shared theories, and to allow us to confront the fact that the novelty and alterity our patients present can upset us. Likewise, countertransference may be forced sometimes to subsume a group dimension, as in the situation which I described, where primal scene and Oedipal contents needed the enlarged psychic space of the group of patients attending my psyche in order to be recognised and processed. Whether Noa's solution will be successful, perhaps only next generations will be able to prove, but the

enormous amount of psychic work she is carrying out and the balanced development of Leo appear to be promising.

The mythopoeic function of the psyche, spurred and fostered by the emergence of desire, is crucial to work out reality and unconscious psychic events and to reshape them into new myths, both individual and groupal. Myths are basic family organizers which provide a means to interpret reality and are built through a group unconscious work of symbolization, both familial and social, which requires an open, transitional space. According to Ruffiot (1989), they result from an inter-phantasying activity produced by unconscious communication between family members, but can also originate either in the social reality or from trans-generational transmission, which accounts for their higher or lower potential for change. The culture of the “actual” and the unlimited power of technology, together with ruptures due to migrations, divorces, heterologous insemination, may not necessarily interrupt the diacronicity of family structure and intergenerational transmission: yet new myths, rites and link structures are needed to add to or supersede the older ones, as has always happened in human history. They are meant to interpret the dialectic between otherness and sameness in creative ways that differ from past ones, and find new lively ways of expression.

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