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**EDITORIAL**

**THE FAMILY AND ITS ANCESTORS**

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The first issue of our journal, the International Revue, is the final stop of a long journey and the starting point of a new exploration. The long journey of family and couple psychoanalysis started with Freud and its statements linking individual psychology and social psychology and highlighting the presence of the other as a model, an object, a helper, an enemy in the individual's psychic life. In Little Hans Freud discussed phobias in children by means of an original work on the father, which we could see today as an anticipation of parental therapy. Also in his essay on Leonardo, Freud focused on the family as the cause of problems in the patient. But we cannot forget that Freud also suggested different and oscillating positions. The family, unlike the couple, is seldom seen as an explicit subject of study in his writings. References to the family are mostly indirect, for example when discussing the issues of identification, unconscious guilt or the Super Ego.

In the history of clinical research in this area a relevant role was played by the opinion Freud expressed in 1917 in a circle of Viennese doctors when he stated that psychoanalysis cannot be studied like a

medical science and that it does not accept witnesses. This excellent method can be used by one person only and cannot be applied to a group of persons (Freud 1917). He also warned against intrusions of relatives that can take place in individual analysis and can determine a danger difficult to manage (Freud, 26th lesson, 1926-17).

We cannot oversee then how this process has been full of difficulties, nor how much we still have ahead of us. One of the earliest psychoanalytical congresses, held in Nyon in 1936 had as a surprising theme "Family neurosis and neurotic family". But this kind of research did not become widespread. We have to wait until 1949 when John Bowlby published his clinical paper "The study and reduction of group tensions in the family", where he described joint interviews used as a support for individual therapy. Another important year was 1959, when Benedek created the term parenthood and stressed the importance of working with the parents in the treatment of children, an issue already present in Anna Freud's thinking. In the following years work and research increased and articles were published confirming an increasing interest for this issue in many areas of the world.

Britain, the United States, Argentina, France, Italy were the first countries where clinical and research centres, associations and training schools developed with alternating results.

Luckily clinical work is a powerful stimulus to change and, in fact, clinical work with serious patients, treatment of children and adolescents and group work represented actual challenges that forced psychoanalysts to widen their field of observation beyond the individual space.

The interest for groups, for the clinical work with children and adolescents, in particular with serious patients who may be unable to produce representations, to symbolize and tend to use concrete actions in the sessions, who have fragile boundaries of the self, made the intervention in family and couple settings an inevitable response. The work in these settings represents the natural evolution of the field. On one side, there were approaches based on the British model, where the crucial element was the use of mutual projective identification for communication and control, as we can see in Dicks's concept of unconscious collusion or in Shapiro's work on the delineations of family members. On the other, an application of object relation theory to the

functioning of couples and families was developed. And also, starting from the theories of group functioning, a school developed in Argentina, headed by Pichon Riviere, one of the first in this field. Eigner, Berenstein, Losso, Puget and many others worked with different orientations in Argentina.. In France articulated and rich models were developed among others by Anzieu, Kaës, Ruffiot and Eigner again, without neglecting great thinkers such as Racamier, Lemaire and Garcia Badaracco.

But also in Italy and Germany many psychoanalysts engaged in this area, in Italy following the British model, and in Germany starting from Stierlin's ideas. These studies have been carried on and new models were presented, such as the theory of attachment or relational and intersubjective psychoanalysis.

And upon reflection, I realize that I do not have time to quote many more thinkers and that the ones I mentioned represent just a very personal selection.

We could ask ourselves what these approaches have in common and at the start of this new journal what is our common ground.

I think that rather than a strong model, psychoanalysts working with these settings, share an observation stance that focuses on the links among persons.

Link or relation or interaction or collusion or unconscious contract or interphantasmatisation, or attunement or unconscious connivance or co-construction, whatever we want to call it, a family and couple psychoanalyst does not look only at the individual's unconscious contents, but at what happens at various levels, from the most superficial to the deepest level of individuals, to what binds and articulates them.

This is the basic element we all share, but there are other aspects, such as the study of intersubjectivity, as a theoretical object and as a method, which obviously require a double understanding or for some a double metapsychology: the one centred on the individual and the one analyzing the relational or group functioning and requiring the study of the connection between the two.

Two more concepts, in my opinion, are common to clinicians at different latitudes. The first one consists in considering the patient in

the couple or family group as the one expressing and revealing a discomfort actually belonging to him/herself and the group. "Spokesperson" (Pichon Riviere), "word" bearer (Kaës) with the function of indicator or intermediary (to use Pichon Riviere's term), he/she denounces, signals the group's unconscious fantasy.

The other concept consists in considering the individual as the junction of an intergenerational chain that goes beyond his/her existence. I cannot but mention here Freud's famous statement that individuals lead a double existence, one where they are the end in itself, the other where they are members of a chain to which they are unwillingly subject or at least without their consent (Freud, 1914, pp.460-461). In this statement important issues are included that have attracted the interest of psychoanalysts all over the world in the past ten years and still show little known aspects that must be studied in depth: intergenerational and transgenerational transmission, memory, the relation between fate and destiny in individuals and generations, trauma and posterity, the sense of individual and family time and their divergence, the multiplicity of focuses of its conjugations (Green, Diachrony in psychoanalysis, 2003).

Enlightened by those who came before us in the complex history I mentioned, we too, as couple and family psychoanalysts and psychotherapists, are the heirs of a generational chain of studies that from Freud arrives to the present. If the psychic processes of a generation did not continue in the following one, each generation would need to acquire its attitude to existence anew and there would be no progress and no evolution, Freud wrote, but on the shoulders of our ancestors we can look today at our work in a new perspective.

So probably no other issue would have been as suitable for starting our new journal as the family and its ancestors that represent our link with the past as individuals and as members of the analytical family with its long tradition.

The creation of a journal within an association, the Association Internationale de Psychanalyse de Couple et de Famille, represents also one of the places this association will use for thinking its objects and the other, for confronting and knowing each other.

There are already journals discussing these themes, but this might be the first time that psychoanalysts and psychotherapists from different countries, speaking different languages and following different

theoretical models meet for a common journey and try to present their observations and exchange opinions, acquisitions and doubts.

The plurality of languages, interventions and models, the confrontation among them in addition to an outstanding scientific level will have to be the most important features and ambition of this journal.

And this is confirmed not only by the papers of different authors included in this issue but also by the presence of an editorial board made up of people from different countries and with a different approach.

In starting this exciting journey we accepted the challenge of complexity and its heuristic method: "the crisis of closed and clear concepts" (Morin, 1985) and the idea of multidimensional thinking, a thinking that accepts the coexistence of different logics, of different natures. On the other hand, the complex object of our study, the family and couple, shares a double nature: it is at the same time a unity and a multiplicity of persons. It challenges us at the level of unitary and individual functioning and at intersubjective and intrapsychic level. All this makes us aware of the relativism of our observations: we know we are exploring one of the many possible maps of reality. Due to a partial and selective need, we respect the maps of others, the places of others where research and study go on in different settings: individual, group, institutional places that belong to us and that we do not give up as we feel that they are our natural and incontrovertible home.

This complexity requires the common efforts of us all, but also courage, audacity of discovery, the sense of doubt and the humility of research.

This journal, today appearing only as an internet site, will contain various areas. Besides an introductory article, in each issue there will be articles in one of the three official languages of our association (English, French, Spanish). A section will contain debates and another reviews of books. Near its central theme, the journal will contain also papers on clinical, research and field work.

We would also like to open a dialogue with our readers. Comments, suggestions and critiques will be a useful stimulus for growth.

And I like to close by thanking our mentors that support us by participating in our scientific committee.

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\* *Revista del Hospital de Niños de Buenos Aires. Vol VI. N° 020. pp 41.*  
Equinus deformity: the foot is in a permanent plantar flexion and its axis tends to follow that of the leg. Cavus deformity: the plantar cavity is excessively curvy; the sole is convex and the ankle is elevated while the heel is elevated and the toes point downwards. Varus deformity: the bottom of the foot is twisted inwards, the internal border is elevated while the external border descends. Adduct deformity: the fore-foot presents itself in adduction regarding the back part of the foot. The internal border of the foot presents an angle towards the medial part, the toes are turned inward in the horizontal plane; the external border is convex and the culminating point of the deformity can be seen in the external border, which corresponds to the metatarsal area. Internal torsion of the axis of the leg: the maleolus peroneus is placed ahead of the internal maleolus, in such a way that the entire foot is turned inwards according to the vertical axis of the leg, accompanying the leg with this movement of internal torsion.

<sup>[2]</sup> Idiopathic Myelofibrosis: Of a secondary origin to neoplasms and infections. It is nowadays known that in IM the proliferation of the marrow fibroblasts is due to the liberation, within the marrow, of a substance, the growth factor, associated to platelets, which comes from the alpha granules. In secondary myelofibrosis the hematopoiesis (destruction of the red blood cells) outside of the marrow could constitute a return to the foetal hematopoiesis. The mechanisms leading to the appearance of myeloid metaplasia in IM are scarcely known. In the biopsy of the marrow, the presence of lymphoid nodules within the bone marrow supports the assumption of an immune origin. (Quoted from Farreras, P; Rozman,C.: "*Medicina Interna*".Vol.II. Harcourt Brace. Spain, 13th edition. Third re-print, 1997. pp.1714 - 1715).

[3] Patients who are under 60 respond well to treatment and their median length of survival is approximately ten years. When the a patient presents varied symptoms a bone marrow transplant can be performed when there is an adequate donor sibling available. (U.S.National Institute of Health, 2005).

[4] These details were obtained after Yo-yo's death. They were provided by a paternal aunt and cousins who required interviews in order to work through this unexpected outcome. This reconstruction was carried out by part of the bereaved family, with whom I worked *apres-coup* in order to give new meaning to this history.

[5] Translator's note: It should be noticed that in Spanish "Yo" means "Me" or "I", that is why the connection between two "me" is clearly seen in the Spanish language: "Yo-Yo" (like the toy) translates into "Me-Me".