

Toward a new psychopathology

Psychiatry, ill-defined as it is at present, still bases its practice, education and research on a number of paradigms that have been formulated in the last century. Many of these have eroded¹ and are likely to require a reformulation or replacement by new paradigms². The changes in society and medicine that have contributed to the need to replace paradigms have already been reported and described^{3,4}. In this special issue of the *Journal of Psychopathology*, we aim to present and discuss new forms of psychopathology and new psychiatric disturbances, which represent the consequence of the health, cultural, technological, economic and scientific changes that have recently occurred in society. In particular, social crisis and modernisation have significantly modified boundaries of psychopathology⁵; too often psychiatrists are called to deal with mental health problems, which are not proper mental disorders, but abnormal reactions to adverse life events or to external and internal stressors⁴. The new expressions of psychopathological problems, which are due to the above changes, are generating diagnostic and therapeutic difficulties for clinicians and other mental health professionals^{6,7}, which make the rediscovery of psychopathology one of the top priorities for psychiatric training and practice^{8,9}.

In this issue of the *Journal of Psychopathology*, several papers deal with these new expressions of psychopathology, taking into account a broad perspective from epidemiology and diagnostic features to treatment options. In particular, the introductory paper of this issue has been entrusted to Prof. Giovanni Stanghellini with the case of gender dysphoria, which is considered a paradigmatic example of the psychopathology of the present. The second paper deals with the role of society and modernisation on psychopathology, going beyond the DSM-5¹⁰. The link between molecular neurobiology and phenomenological psychopathology has been investigated in the paper on schizophrenia, giving the way to a new wave of collaborative research between psychopathologists and neuroscientists. The other classic psychiatric syndromes, such as depression, bipolar

disorder, anxiety disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorder, are considered in light of recent psychopathological changes that have been made to the DSM-5¹¹ and that are likely to modify psychiatric practice. New forms of psychopathologies, such as those related to dysfunctional use of the Internet, pathological gambling and other behavioural addictions, as well as the effects of new psychopathological phenomena induced by novel psychoactive substances, all find their appropriate place in this issue. A search for a common psychopathological ground of the new forms of (proposed) eating disorders, and of the many somatic symptom disorders, is proposed in the respective papers. The reported psychopathological perspectives on suicide attempters and migrants will help us to better understand the clinical characteristics of groups who are at high-risk of developing psychiatric disorders. Finally, a look into post-modern society from a psychopathological viewpoint is made by taking into account clinical, anthropological, legal and social considerations.

All papers in this issue have been written by Italian and international expert clinicians and researchers in the field, making this special issue the first attempt to balance Italian research and practice with those from US, UK, Denmark, Germany, Spain, Canada, Portugal and Japan. We found this issue extremely stimulating for our every day practice, since many of our new patients are described herein, and many questions of our students are answered.

We are proud to bring to the attention of the readers of the *Journal of Psychopathology* this update on new psychopathological aspects of the various mental disorders, and we hope that the readers will find it as stimulating as we did.

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