Editorial

The current crises, together with a certain fragility of both personal and collective identities, prevent us from facing the increasing complexity of our daily lives. This leads both individuals and entire social groups to adopt behavioral patterns that might be defined as manic flight and paranoid projection: in order to simplify conflicts we represent them to ourselves as being clashes between distant adversaries, where difference and otherness are viewed as being impure. And so we are seeing the rise of fundamentalism, xenophobia, and populism.

The question of how to lend meaning to reality degenerates into a simplified emotional scheme of 'friend versus enemy'. One of the consequences of this process is 'psychological sovereignty'. The social system, rife with rancor and delusion, looks to the authoritarian leader and demands stability, as people no longer believe in progress, because they fear the upheavals that will come with change. The people tend to rally around the idea of a sovereign nation, assuming that the causes of injustice and inequality are all to be found in a lack of national sovereignty.

So-called 'promise-of-change politics' appear on the scene, in which challenges are issued to international communal organizations. In this way, a common living space is created which is characterized by an inherent sub-conscious paranoia, with an imaginary enemy created by projection, along with the concurrent imaginary defense mechanisms; where relationships will always be defined in accordance with such constructs as 'strength-weakness', 'victory-defeat', and 'pure-impure'. What end up being shared are the common walls which have been erected (cum-moenia).

The mission of Polis-analysis, as a clinical approach to society as a whole, is to allow for a rebirth of the community as a 'sharing of gifts and privileges' (cum-munus), in which Relational Goods, such as trust, reciprocity, and cooperation, can circulate. However, given the fact that the amount of violence is proportionally related to the extent to which one's own point of view is narrow, or limited, such a development will only become possible by beginning to expand the pool of semiotic capital, or meaning, by articulating visions of the Other (both within and outside our own selves) that are more imaginative, empathetic, and wise.