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## EDITORIAL

Karen Minikin,<sup>1</sup>  David Pavón Cuéllar,<sup>\*2</sup>  and Keith Tudor<sup>3</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Principal, Insights—South West; Leadership Team, Black, African and Asian Therapy Network, UK

<sup>2</sup>Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, Morelia, Mexico

<sup>3</sup>Professor of Psychotherapy, Auckland University of Technology, Aotearoa New Zealand

## INTRODUCTION

After a busy year of transition for the journal—see our first editorial of the year published in June (Tudor et al., 2022)—we are delighted to have overseen the publication of a full volume of four issues. Earlier this year, as we were establishing ourselves as a group of editors, and given the invasion of Ukraine on 24<sup>th</sup> February, we decided that we wanted to propose a special issue of the journal on “War, Trauma, and Refugees”. What you see in this issue is the result of that call for papers and, as ever, we are grateful to colleagues who have answered the call. The result is an issue which offers accounts of the impact of war, not only in Ukraine, but also that on women. The issue reflects all three topics of war, trauma, and refugees based on different experiences and viewpoints, and comprises six peer-reviewed articles, and two Notes From the Front Line, as well as some images.

## THIS ISSUE

In the first article in this issue, Florentina Andreescu compares and contrasts the narratives about the war in Ukraine of those in Russia with those in Ukraine. The surreal representation of the Ukrainian war in Russian media is explored in light of conspiracy theories, and the manipulation of the nation via covering up the terror of human experience and focusing only on national victory. The line between reality and fantasy is also taken up with reference to Volodymyr Zelensky’s previous career as an actor, and the particular irony that, having played out the current scenario in a television sitcom (situation comedy), now, as the elected president of Ukraine, he and his country are fighting Russia in reality. In considering how the

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\*Contact details: davidpavoncuellar@gmail.com

surreal is privileged over reality, Andreescu also raises an interesting point about collective schizophrenia.

The reality of war can disappear not only behind the media spectacle like in Ukraine, but also behind the psychologisation of the traumatic experience of war, as Artemis Christinaki shows in an article written on the basis of her experience in a refugee camp in Greece. This experience allows Christinaki to become familiar with the way in which psychology both copes with the 'trauma' of war and assists in 'aid' programs for refugees from Syria and other regions in conflict. Using critical psychology and postcolonial theory, the author critically analyses the political background of aid and its effects on the formation of the subjectivity of the foreigner in the European fortress. Her article will surely be useful to better understand the politics of psychology in 'refugee crises' such as the one resulting from the war in Ukraine.

The third submission, a 'Note From the Front Line', also focuses on the war in Ukraine, this time from the point of view of an educator and a student on an online clinical psychology training course. Although based at the University of Warsaw in Poland, the online course comprises international students in rural, urban, and suburban areas across Colombia, Poland, Norway and unceded Sápmi lands, Turkey, and elsewhere. Informed by a Freirean approach to education, the course focuses on psychotherapy with marginalised populations. The article discusses how the course was transformed by the invasion of Ukraine, not least as the students based in Poland were called upon to host and/or provide support for forcibly displaced people from Ukraine. This is a powerful and challenging article which helps us think critically (not least about the term 'refugee') and discusses the implications for anti-oppressive work both in practice and in educational contexts.

In response to the protests in Iran over the death of a 22-year-old girl, Mahsa Amini, killed by the morality police for not wearing the 'proper hijab', Mehr Afarin Kohan offers a short article which describes the process leading to this powerful women-led movement in Iran. The importance of this resistance is positioned as a key moment in history: one that reflects the historical 'gender apartheid' of the region and the international political implications that it captures. The article discusses the politics of women's bodies and the process of reclaiming that in the context of a patriarchal dictatorship. This is followed by a short 'Note From the Front Line' by Fari Rasskeh, which is a personal powerful address sharing the impact of the uprising on herself as a woman and psychotherapist living in England.

The symbolism of women's bodies as an entity to oppress, possess, claim, and traumatise is part of what Valerie Sinason discusses in her account from another front line, one of working with women who are the victims of rape during war. She offers a harrowing illustration that portrays the experience of terrible brutality as well as the first steps towards recovery. The case is drawn from a region in armed conflict and mirrors some of what has happened in Ukraine, where women have reported rape and the rape and sexual abuse of their children.

Two final articles in this issue take a more theoretical view of these subjects. The first is an excellent article—we (Karen and Keith) may say—by David on the subject of Freud's ideas about war. David firstly provides some historical context to the two papers Freud wrote on the subject of war, and then elaborates Freud's themes of disillusionment and suspicion, as well as his denunciation of the primitivism and hypocrisy of humanity, and his views on hope. In the second, drawing on Charles Darwin, Carl Gustav Jung, and other authors, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone reflects on the biological roots of power and its violent human manifestations in history and in the world today. The aggressive, competitive, oppressive, self-addictive, and deceptive tendencies of leaders such as Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump, and Benjamin Netanyahu, are interpreted as expressions of alpha males and associated with the Jungian archetypal figure of Wotan.

These articles are followed by a poem and a photograph supplied by Gottfried Heuer, one of the members of the editorial board. As ever, we are grateful to Gottfried for supplying art, including photographs, and poetry to the journal and for curating this as a Section; and encourage readers of the journal to submit such items to this Section.

Finally, we end with some parting words from Keith, who has led *PPI* for 11 years, as editor from 2011 to 2021 and as co-editor from 2021 to 2022. Keith's words offer an overview of the last decade of the history of *PPI* and allow us to appreciate what two of us, David and Karen, consider Keith's impeccable, invaluable, and unsurpassable work. This work has resulted in important achievements such as the production of 11 volumes comprising 34 issues, including the co-edition of five special issues, and the inclusion of the journal in the prestigious Scopus database. Keith is a vital writer and activist and has established the journal as a truly international endeavour, building on the pioneering work of Nick Totton and Andrew Samuels before him. We are grateful for the platform this has given us as psychotherapists to have a political voice and to establish context, culture, and social and political influences firmly in the centre of the work that we do. You will be sorely missed, Keith, but the doors you have opened for many people like us matter a great deal and so you will not be forgotten.

## LOOKING FORWARD

After working with Keith for the last year, we (Karen and David) are facing our first year as co-editors with some anxiety but comforted by the wonderful support of Angie Strachan as editorial assistant and the accompaniment of the editorial team, including Keith from next year as consulting editor. We have four issues planned for Volume 21 in 2023: one generic issue and three special issues (one a tribute to Keith's work, one on gender, and one on African psychology). Funding for the journal will continue to be generously secured by The Black, African and Asian Therapy Network (BAATN).

**REFERENCES**

Tudor, K., Minikin, K., & Pavón-Cuéllar, D. (2022). Editorial. *Psychotherapy and Politics International*, 20(1&2). <https://doi.org/10.24135/ppi.v20i1and2.03>