

PSYCHOPEDAGOGIC COUNSELING FOR TWINS AND TWIN FAMILIES

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In the academic year 1973-74, the Mendel Institute, within the specialized services it offers to Italian twins, instituted psychopedagogic counseling for the purpose of assisting twins and their families.

This service is carried out in the intermediate field between neuropsychiatry and social assistance. Cases involving family and social maladjustment were referring for counseling. During the period of time mentioned above, the counseling service exam-

ined 96 cases, of which 58 involved problems of school retardation and 38 involved family maladjustment because of changed parent-twin relationships.

The counseling service aimed at achieving improved family and school relationships by means of various therapeutic interventions. The work of psychopedagogic consultation, besides the immediate therapy, has permitted deeper study of maladjustment by means of analyses of the twins' condition as a possible additional cause of the maladjustment itself. Analysis of the cases in this limited sample would seem to indicate an indirect incidence of the twin situation *per se* (couple effect), somewhat emphasized by the family and social environment.

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3. *Twin Centers, Organization and Records: Better Information, Standardization, and Cooperation*

TWIN INSTITUTES: FROM THE MENDEL INSTITUTE IN ROME TO THE GEDDA INSTITUTE IN JERUSALEM

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The Gregor Mendel Institute of Medical Genetics and Twin Research was established in Rome in 1953 as a private, nonprofit corporation, with a twofold aim.

The first aim was to offer to all twins any possible, general and specialized, medical, psychological, and social assistance. A small polyclinic was therefore developed within the institute, including out-patient departments for most medical specialties, clinical laboratories, and a small in-patient department.

A total of approximately 15,000 twin pairs have so far registered and received free medical care at the Mendel Institute. Any twin pair may register (registration is free) and any registered pair may apply for

medical examination any time during eight months a year. From November 1973 through June 1974 some 3000 twin pairs have undergone medical examination in the various departments of the Mendel Institute.

The second aim was to take advantage from the precious scientific material thus acquired for scientific research in the area of human genetics and the study of twins as such. Research laboratories were therefore also developed.

Research in the various fields has been associated to publishing and promotional activities, as particularly witnessed by the publication of *Acta Geneticae Medicae et Gemellologiae*, the only international journal devoted to twin studies, by the 1969 Symposium on Twin Studies, and by the present Congress.

The Mendel Institute still appears to be the only such center in the world, devoted to twins and to twin studies.

In 1972, however, twenty years after its foundation in Rome, a cotwin to the Mendel Institute was finally conceived when a symbolic but significant ceremony took place in Jerusalem, and the cornerstone of The Luigi Gedda Institute of Medical Genetics and Twin Research was laid on the