

P R E S E N T I N G T H I S I S S U E

Foreword

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Editor-in-chief for this Issue



Symmetry may be thought of as an ideal or as a standard of perfection. We find symmetry in different realms of nature. On both a microscopic and macroscopic scale, the mineral world makes use of this type of architecture most notably for crystals. The plant kingdom also provides us with magnificent examples of symmetry such as the leaf of a fern. This pattern appears repeatedly in the animal kingdom where symmetry is the necessary and inescapable blueprint for complexity. It makes it seem as if by simply mirroring the right and the left sides, everything becomes simpler and more efficient. What we do see is that symmetry is a principle chosen by nature that makes us who we are.

By examining the underside of a crab, we can marvel at the perfect symmetry of its five pairs of legs with the first pair modified to form pinchers. But if we look more closely, there is never perfect symmetry. We quickly discover this during a meal when we share the crab legs: there is always one smaller than the other. . .

Imperfections of symmetry cannot be called asymmetry. The prefix *a* means lacking. Asymmetry means lacking symmetry: the face of the sole whose eyes are on the same side can be called asymmetric: the eyed side is opposite the blind side. The term dyssymmetry/dissymmetry is more exact (*cf. note page 134*). A dyssymmetric/dissymmetric structure lacks symmetry but is still symmetric.

When we quickly look at a face, only significant dyssymmetries draw our attention. Our eye is accustomed to a state of relative symmetry that is, in fact, the norm.

This is why we are devoting most of this issue to the subject of diagnosis. Rather than taking it for granted, we should consider the clinical examination to be the fundamental phase of diagnosis and recognize the soundness

of this approach. Dental students from the University of Rennes have written an article dealing with procedures for the diagnosis of dyssymmetry. Jacques FAURE delves further into diagnostic approaches by detailing the relevance of a cutting edge complementary examination that involves the use of 3D scanner imaging with its tridimensional cephalometric analysis. It makes it possible for us to analyze defects in symmetry that are so difficult to fully comprehend. Marion BILLET and Bernard CADRE discuss condylar hyperplasia and provide the specifics about cases of both abnormal horizontal and vertical growth as well as about early treatment in the active phase by condylectomy. Mohamed EL OKEILY analyzes and explains surgery of the

chin by presenting indispensable concepts so that we might understand all the finesse involved with this procedure. Benjamin DELVALLEZ presents a clinical case of dyssymmetry treated at the Center for Dento-Facial Orthopedics of Rennes. Julia COHEN-LEVY shares her very asymmetric radio "logical" reflections and I, for my part, present the Ditramax system that can be an additional aid for evaluating facial dyssymmetries by showing the exact position of the maxillary arch within the face.

I hope that a reading of this issue will provide you with the necessary essentials in order to better assess mandibular dyssymmetries that are currently encountered and sometimes so surprising.

PS. For those of you who know me, the discussion of the exactness of the spelling between dissymmetry and dyssymmetry might seem a little daring. However, accompanied by my literature professor wife, I dove into dictionaries and grammars, in order to understand why there was such a debate. The disagreement is based on the origin of the prefix: *dys-* a Greek prefix that means difficult, abnormal (for example: dyspnea, dysuria. . .) and *dis-* a Latin prefix that means separation, negation (for example: discord, disproportion, disjointed. . .).

In *Le bon usage (Proper Usage)* by the grammarian Maurice Grevisse*, there is a footnote dealing only with the two possible spellings. "Bescherelle, Littré, Clédat, the General Dictionary and the Larousse of the XXth century write dyssymmetry and see the Greek prefix *dys* in this word. But it seems preferable to interpret this, as Nyrop does, as the Latin prefix *dis* indicating negation, and to write, as the French Academy does: *dissymmetry*. Robert, the *Encyclopedic Comprehensive Larousse* and the *Comprehensive Larousse of the French Language* mention both spellings."

* MAURICE GREVISSE. *LE BON USAGE*. ONZIÈME ÉDITION REVUE. 2^e TIRAGE, DUCULOT, 1980.