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CULTURE, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

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Thank you Dr. Theodore Shapiro for your kind introduction. I also thank members of the Program Committee who have given me this honor to address you. I recognize Ford Rowan, a lawyer and journalist, a former panelist on NBC's Meet the Press and Chairperson the National Center for Critical Incident Analysis, who has come here to listen to us. Since this meeting is taking place in Washington, DC, the political capital of our nation, I believe it is most timely to ask how psychoanalysis can deepen our understanding of cultural, historical, and political events and expand its influence on international relations and diplomacy.

I was born on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus when it was a British colony seven years before the beginning of World War II. I was raised in a good home, but I also grew up at a time of impending danger coming from the outside world that, as a child, my mind could not fully comprehend. After the Nazis' 1941 airborne invasion of another Mediterranean island, Crete, it was expected that they would next invade Cyprus.

We dug a bomb shelter in our garden and took refuge there on many occasions, sometimes in the middle of rainy nights when sirens woke us. Food was rationed and we were forced to eat dark, tasteless bread and taught how to wear gas masks. I began seeing Indian Sikh soldiers with long beards and turbans walking around the streets of my neighborhood in Nicosia, the capital city. I witnessed a

British Spitfire shooting down an Italian war plane just above my elementary schoolyard where I was playing with other kids. This must have been a frightening experience for me because I kept a small piece of glass from the plane's wreckage among my valuable objects until I came to the United States as an adult in early 1957. I suspect that this piece of glass was a kind of linking object (Volkan 1981) to this terrible event and by keeping it, and in a sense controlling it, I might have been attempting to master my childhood anxiety that I might lose my life.

Anticipating an invasion by the Nazis, my mother, my two sisters, my grandmother and I left Nicosia and went to live in a village some 20 miles away because we thought we would be safer there. My father remained in Nicosia to carry out his duties as a school teacher. I recall German war planes, flying very low, passing over the village to bomb military installations near Nicosia.

In my mind's eye I still see a German pilot waving down at me while flying over the village. I would hear the bombs drop, and I did not know if my father was killed or not. I would remain anxious until I saw him during his weekend trips to be with us, as in those days there were no telephones or electricity in this village. To the women in my family I was the little prince while my father was away. Consider this, combined with my fear that my father could be killed by German bombs, and you can imagine how this environment influenced my oedipal strivings. In my childhood, my internal wars were intertwined with external wars.

The Germans never did invade Cyprus, but continuous fear that they might made me keenly aware of what is called *large-group identity*. As a Turkish child I wondered why I should be exposed to dangers because of “others” war. Being “British” to me meant the governor and other rulers of the island for whom I was only a “native.” Most of my people, the Turks, lived in another location, the Turkish mainland, separated from the island. The mainland Turks were not involved in the war. At home sometimes I would hear stories about Cyprus when it was an Ottoman territory and about my long-gone relatives on my mother’s side who were high-level Turkish administrators of the island. The British, who by coming to the island had ruined my mother’s family’s fortunes, seemed very foreign to me. As a child I never met a German or an Italian, but learned that there were persons belonging to these identities that I should be afraid of. I heard about Jews being in danger in Germany, but I had never met a Jewish person. In Nicosia we lived in a house situated just where a Turkish section of the city ended and the Greek section began. In fact, a nice Greek family lived next door to us. But we could not be intimate with them; they had another large-group identity. I did not know their language, their prophet or God. My family members, like most Cypriot Turks at that time, were followers of cultural revolutions in the new Turkey of the mainland and were not involved in religion in our daily lives. I never went to a mosque or learned even one prayer. We were cultural Muslim people. We felt no prejudice against Cypriot Greeks. Simply, they were different. There were also those soldiers from India who were supposed to protect us, but they did not seem to be friendly.

Today I stand in front of you as a Turkish-American psychoanalyst who is still interested in the intertwining of internal and external wars, large-group identity issues, and the reasons people kill and maim others in the name of large-group identity.

What is large-group identity? Freud seldom referred to the term “identity.” One well-known reference to identity is found in a speech he wrote that was delivered on his behalf at B’nai B’rith. In the course of his paper, Freud wondered why he was bound to Jewry since, as a non-believer, he had never been instilled with ethnonational pride or religious faith. Nevertheless, Freud noted a “safe privacy of a common mental construction,” and a clear consciousness of his “inner identity” [as a Jew] (Freud 1926, p. 274). It is interesting that Freud’s remarks linked his individual identity with his large-group identity.

Although there was no clear description of “identity” in specific psychoanalytic terms until Erik Erikson’s (1956) interest in this topic, there is a consensus that it refers to a subjective experience. Revising Erikson’s description of individual identity, I define large-group identity—whether it refers to tribes, ethnicity, nationality, religion or political ideology such as “We are Apache,” “We are Kurds,” “We are French,” “We are Muslims,” or “We are Communists”—as the subjective experience of thousands or millions of people. These people are linked by a persistent sense of sameness from childhood on, although they share some characteristics with others who belong to foreign groups. Under the umbrella of large-group identity there are subgroup identities, such as professional identities. A person can change a subgroup identity without much

anxiety, unless such a change unconsciously becomes connected with an intrapsychic danger such as losing an internalized mother image or external danger such as losing environmental security. But for all practical purposes, an individual cannot change his or her large-group identity, especially after the adolescence passage (Blos 1979), just as the person cannot change the individual core identity (Volkan 1988). Think of a man—let us say he is Italian—who is a photographer. If he decides to stop practicing photography and take up carpentry, he may call himself a carpenter instead of a photographer, but he cannot stop being an Italian and become an Englishman. His Italian-ness is part of his core large-group identity.

Each large-group identity includes “identity markers,” or what John Mack (1979) called “cultural amplifiers,” which are concrete or abstract symbols and signs and actions ranging from physical body characteristics, language, nursery rhymes, food, dances, religious/magical beliefs, cultural traditions, myths, or flags to images of historical events and past heroes. In places such as United States and Israel, which Peter Loewenberg (1995) describes as “synthetic” nations, identity markers are variable and some of them are not shared. This is not so in other nations such as Greece, where one ethnic group comprises the majority. Although there may be dissenters in a large group, they do not modify the basic elements of a large-group identity unless they have huge followings which then start an influential subgroup and become involved in a new large-group identity. In a large-group setting a “normal” degree of shared narcissism attaches itself to

large-group identity and creates a sense of uniqueness in identity markers and usually makes them a source of pride.

Today my talk primarily will focus on large-group identity, its role in international relations and my attempt to develop a psychoanalytic large-group psychology in its own right in order to communicate with diplomats, politicians and others dealing with world affairs and bring these matters to their attention.

A letter from Albert Einstein: Resistance to studying wars and war-like situations

The year I was born, 1932, Albert Einstein was 53 years old and Sigmund Freud was 76. That year Einstein wrote to Freud, asking if the new science called psychoanalysis could offer insights that might deliver humankind from the menace of war. In his response to Einstein, Freud (1932) expressed little hope for an end to war and violence or the role of psychoanalysis in changing human behavior beyond the individual level.

In 2006 when it was Austria's turn to lead the European Union, Austria declared that year to be the Year of Mozart and the Year of Freud. I had the honor to be the Fulbright-Sigmund Freud Privatstiftung Professor of Psychoanalysis in Vienna at this time, taught political psychology at the University of Vienna for a semester and had an office at 19 Berggasse. While working in Freud's house for four months trying to organize an international meeting between psychoanalysts and diplomats to celebrate Freud's 100th birthday, I pictured him at this same location in 1932 and wondered about his response to Einstein. Anti-Semitism

surrounded Freud at that time, and a year later Adolf Hitler would be the dictator of Germany. Was Freud's response to Einstein an attempt to deny the impending danger to himself, his family and neighbors? I came to a conclusion that this might be true even though, of course, he was conscious of what was happening in Europe. As Peter Loewenberg (1991) and Leo Rangell (2003) remind us, some aspects of a large-group history induce anxiety.

Even though some analysts such as Jacob Arlow (1973) have found indications of cautious optimism in some of Freud's writings, Freud's general pessimism about the role of psychoanalysis in large-group issues and international relations was mirrored by many of his followers. This, I think, has played a key role in limiting for a long time the contributions psychoanalysis has made to the understanding of what exists within specific large groups and international relations, even though some analysts such as Edward Glower (1947), Franco Fornari (1966), Robert Waelder (1971), Alexander Mitscherlich and Margarete Mitscherlich (Mitscherlich A. 1971; Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1975) tried to open doors to such investigations.

There was another factor that played a role until relatively recently in limiting psychoanalytic contributions to international relations. Freud's (1921) large-group psychology reflects a theme that mainly focuses on the understanding of the individual: the members of the group sublimate their aggression toward the leader and turn it into loyalty in a process that is similar to that of a son turning

his negative feelings toward his oedipal father to identification with the father. The members of a large group idealize the leader, identify with each other, and rally around the leader. As Robert Waelder (1971) would remark later, Freud was describing only regressed groups. Much later others (Anzieu 1984; Chasseguet-Smirgel 1984; and Kernberg 1980) wrote about fantasies shared by members of a large group. They suggested that large groups represent idealized mothers (breast mothers) who repair narcissistic injuries. It is assumed that external processes that threaten the group members' image of an idealized mother can initiate political processes and influence international affairs. But, again, these theories primarily focused on individuals' perceptions, and they did not offer *specificity* concerning what exists within a large-group psychology itself and what might be useful in a diplomatic or political strategy to tame or prevent massive aggression.

A third factor that prevented psychoanalysis from playing a significant role in contributing to international relations again goes back to Freud. In his early efforts to develop psychoanalytic theories, Freud gave up the idea that the sexual seduction of children came from the external world, and instead focused on the stimuli that comes from the child's own wishes and fantasies for formation psychopathology. Since early psychoanalysts followed this tradition, classical psychoanalysis accepted this de-emphasis on actual seduction coming from the external world and generalized it to include de-emphasis on the role of other types of traumatic external events, including international events.

Beginning with Freud's own writings in 1917, only a relative emphasis was given to patients' experiences in wars, war-like conditions, drastic political changes and reactivations of ancestors' historical events. Decades ago, as it exists today, there were multiple psychoanalytic schools. All schools seemed to bypass, to a great extent, the influence of traumatizing external historical events. For example, Melanie Klein (1961) did not pay attention to the war when she treated a ten-year-old boy named Richard in 1941. During Richard's analysis, the terror of the Blitz under which Melanie Klein and Richard lived was not examined. We will never know for sure why Melanie Klein avoided the influence of the war while analyzing Richard. There are other occasions when analysts' failure to pay attention to dangerous current or chronic or past historical events was clearly connected with their own resistance to recalling and/or re-experiencing troublesome affects and with the analyst's own resistance dovetailing with the patient's resistance. Harold Blum's (1985) description of a Jewish patient who came to him for re-analysis illustrates the extent to which mutual resistances may prevail when both analyst and the patient belong to the same large group which was massively traumatized by an external historical event. Blum's patient's first analyst, who was also Jewish, failed to "hear" their large group's shared trauma at the hands of the Nazis in his patient's material; as a consequence, mutually sanctioned silence and denial pervaded the entire analytic experience, leaving unanalyzed residues of the Holocaust in the patient's symptoms. German-speaking psychoanalysts have also explored the difficulties of "hearing" Nazi-

related influences in their German and Jewish patients (Grubrich-Simitis 1979; Eckstaedt 1989; Jokl 1997; Streeck-Fischer 1999; Volkan, Ast and Greer 2002).

As time went on however, psychoanalytic studies on the Holocaust-related psychic processes, especially on transgenerational transmissions, were deepened. There are too many such studies to list here (see Kogan 1995; Kestenberg and Brenner 1996 and Volkan, Ast and Greer 2002 for reviews of such studies). These studies, however, mostly focused on traumatized individuals and dealt with large-group psychology primarily when its influence on individual psychology was examined.

Before referring to others' work as well as my own that more directly pertains to large-group psychology and international relations, I will go back to 1933 and refer to another letter by Einstein, this one to the Turkish government. Indirectly this letter would play a role in my becoming a psychoanalyst and in my interest in international relations. It will also illustrate once again how personal internal issues become interconnected with historical events.

Another letter by Einstein: Its indirect influence on me

In 1933, Einstein lived in France and was the honorary president of the Organization for the Protection of Jewish Population (OZE). In a letter Einstein asks the President of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkey, "to allow forty

professors and doctors from Germany to continue their scientific and medical work in Turkey. The above mentioned cannot practice further in Germany on account of the laws governing there now. The majority of these men possess vast experience, knowledge and scientific merits and could prove very useful when settling in a new country.” OZE would pay their salaries during the first year of their stay in Turkey. The letter ends as follows: “In supporting this application, I take the liberty to express my hope, that in granting this request your Government will not only perform an act of high humanity, but will also bring profit to your own country.”

Einstein’s request was sent to the Turkish Ministry of Education, which rejected this proposal on the grounds that there were no existing conditions to accept such an unusual request. But Einstein’s request was accepted when the leader of new Turkey Mustafa Kemal, who would become better known as Atatürk, intervened. At that time the Turkish Republic, born from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, was only 10 years old and extremely poor. We know that Turkey had accepted some German-Jewish scholars to come to Turkey even before Einstein’s request (Günergün 2006). Following Einstein’s letter, in 1933, 30 German-Jewish scholars and their families came to Turkey, and eventually 190 other intellectuals and their families arrived. Thus, ultimately, over 1000 lives were saved (Reisman 2006).

Among the German-Jewish intellectuals who fled to Turkey was Professor Oscar Weigert. He would become a consultant to Atatürk in changing the attitude of Turkish people toward labor, bringing labor out of its feudal state and introducing

such ideas as the eight-hour day, regular vacations for workers, workers' compensation and the idea of organizing Turkish labor unions (Weigert 1937). Professor Weigert's wife was an ethnic German, psychoanalyst Edith Vowinckel Weigert. She accompanied her husband to Turkey in 1935 and spent over three years in Ankara before she and her husband went to the United States (Volkan and Itzkowitz 1984; Usak-Sahin 2009).

Due to Atatürk's instructions, Edith Weigert was given a license to practice psychoanalysis in Turkey. She worked mostly with foreigners assigned to different embassies, but she had one Turkish patient who began publishing papers and books on psychoanalysis. Because she was known to the Turkish authorities and diplomats mainly due to her husband's position, Edith Weigert's discussion of psychoanalysis at private parties encouraged interest in Freud's writings. In any case, after the Turkish Republic was born, the Turkish Ministry of Education began to translate one-by-one all major works of Western philosophers, thinkers and novelists. Thus Freud's papers and books became available in Turkish.

My father, who was the only educated child of a farming family in Cyprus, apparently became interested in Freud's writings and bought some of his books in Turkish. The books were kept in a huge black wooden box in my parents' bedroom. As a youngster whose oedipal strivings were kept alive due to external historical circumstances as I described above, I was greatly interested in what he kept in this locked box. Only later I would learn why the wooden box was kept locked. Because of a shared belief that the Nazis would invade Cyprus, some

intellectuals had obtained German dictionaries so they would be able to communicate with the invading Germans and protect their families. But, apparently this was a forbidden act, so my father had to hide his German dictionary. One day when I was able to open the box I found Freud's book, titled *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (Freud 1905) in Turkish next to his German dictionary. You can imagine the symbolism of the black box in my parent's bedroom and how, once more, my oedipal strivings were influenced by historical circumstances. Years later I became a medical student at the University of Ankara where some of the German-Jewish professors who had escaped to Turkey after Einstein's letter was written were still teaching, and very early in my studies, I knew that I wanted to be a psychoanalyst.

Developing survival guilt and sublimations connected with ethnic violence

During World War II an estimated 35,000 Cypriot volunteers, both Greek and Turkish, served side by side in the British armed forces—650 died, 2,500 were taken prisoner. When I was in the medical school, new trends in the international arena turned the island's "natives," as the British used to call them, against the colonizing powers. Greeks wanted union with Greece and to achieve this aim they used terrorism. Within a few decades, reliance on terrorism would become a routine and very deadly tool for violence connected with ethnic, ideological and most recently religious large-group identities. Cypriot Greek terrorism against the British spread and turned Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus against

each other. As my medical studies continued in the 1950s, the large-group violence on the island kept increasing.

During my last two years of medical school I shared a rented room with Erol, another Cypriot Turkish medical student who was two years younger than I, and he became the brother I never had. I graduated from the medical school in 1956 and six months after my graduation I took part in a process which was called a “brain drain” in those days and came to the United States. Three months after my arrival here I received a letter from my father. In the envelope there was a newspaper article with Erol’s picture describing how my friend had gone to Cyprus from Ankara to visit his ailing mother. While trying to purchase medicine for her at a pharmacy he was shot seven times by Cypriot Greek terrorists.

These people killed Erol, a bright young man with a promising future, in order to terrorize the ethnic group to which he belonged. He was killed in the name of large-group identity. I was an intern in a Chicago hospital, in a new environment, in a new culture with no friends. I could not mourn Erol’s death or even realize my own survival guilt.

A few years later I was in my training analysis. At that time the Cypriot Turks back home were being forced to live under subhuman conditions in horrible enclaves that were confined to only three percent of the island. They would remain as such, prisoners, for eleven years. One day when I was still in analysis, on an American television news broadcast I saw my mother and one of my sisters running away from my sister’s house which was under enemy fire. We all

know that we repress memories of our personal analyses. But, I am certain that what was happening to my family, my people on the island, my inability to mourn Erol's death and my survival guilt were not much of a focus during my personal analysis. Years later I wondered if my Jewish analyst's Holocaust-related problems might have prevented him from opening up war-related issues while I was on the couch. Also, years later I noticed that I had made many sublimations. I wrote a book on Cyprus (Volkan 1979) and I studied different aspects of complicated mourning, especially perennial mourning, and wrote books on this topic as well (Volkan 1981; Volkan and Zintl 1993). I became aware of my special relationship with the late psychoanalyst William Niederland who had coined the term "survival guilt" (Niederland 1968). I also realized that I had chosen Greek colleagues as partners in important professional activities.

In 1979, as I will describe soon, I had a real opportunity to study wars, war-like situations and the role of large-group identity in these situations. There are many other psychoanalytic colleagues who, for their own personal motivations, were examining similar topics.

Noticing large-group interactions and large-group psychology

Happenings in the Middle East, Latin America, India, Africa, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Rwanda and elsewhere during recent decades have motivated psychoanalysts to write about wars, war-like situations, terrorism and international relations, and not only by referring to traumatized individuals and

individual psychology. They are also interested in aspects of large-group psychology and societal processes. Here are some examples:

Raphael Moses (1982) examined the Arab-Israeli conflict from a psychoanalytic point of view. Michael Šebek (1992, 1994) studied societal responses to living under communism in Europe. Peter Loewenberg (1995) went back to the history of the Weimar Republic and emphasized its humiliation and economic collapse as major factors in creating shared personality characteristics among the German youth and their embrace of Nazi ideology. Sudhir Kakar (1996) described the effects of Hindu-Muslim religious conflict in Hyderabad, India. Maurice Apprey (1993, 1998) focused on the influence of transgenerational transmission of trauma on African Americans and their culture. Nancy Hollander (1997) explored events in South America and later (Hollander 2010) in the United States after September 11, 2001. Mitch Elliott, Kenneth Bishop and Paul Stokes (2004) and John Alderdice (2007, 2009) examined the situation in Northern Ireland. Samuel Erlich (2010) tried to understand terrorist mind . After September 11, 2001 the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) formed the Terror and Terrorism Study Group. Norwegian analyst Sverre Varvin chaired this study group that lasted for several years (Varvin and Volkan 2003). Also the IPA established a committee on the United Nations that still functions under the chairmanship of our association member Affaf Mahfouz. The theme of the 44th Annual Meeting of the IPA in Rio de Janeiro in the summer of 2005 was “trauma,” including trauma due to historical events.

Clearly, psychoanalytic studies covering large-group process in many parts of the world have begun. There are serious efforts to study psychoanalytically large-group processes and large-group psychology alongside those of traumatized individuals. Way back in 1979 I wrote about two ethnic groups in conflict in Cyprus. Since then I published books and papers on the human need to have large-group enemies and allies, the Arab-Israeli conflict, Communism, psychological process in the Baltic Republics after independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Serbian group psychology after the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, the psychology of Albanians following the death of dictator Enver Hodxa, Kuwaiti responses to the invasion by Saddam Hussein's forces, the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict, the Turkish-Greek as well as Turkish-Armenian relationships, the psychology of extreme religious fundamentalism and the psychology of suicide bombers (Volkan 1988, 1997, 2004, 2006; Volkan and Kayatekin 2006; Volkan and Itzkowitz 1994).

The time has come to expand a psychodynamic large-group psychology in its own right, one that explains patterns of large-group interaction in times of peace and war. I am making some efforts toward this.

Focus on Large-group identity

Some background on the concept of large-group identity and related issues may be helpful in explaining what I mean by large-group psychology in its own right and why it is important. An opportunity for me to study large-group identity in earnest occurred in 1979 when Egyptian president Anwar Sadat made a

historical trip to Israel. During his speech at the Knesset he declared that 70% of the problems between Arabs and Israelis is psychological. Following Sadat's visit to Israel—with the blessing of the American, Egyptian and Israeli governments—the Committee of Psychiatry and Foreign Affairs of the American Psychiatric Association began bringing together influential Egyptians and Israelis every four months or so for 3-4 days of unofficial dialogue. I was a member and then the Chairperson of this committee. This project lasted for six and a half years. During the third year of this dialogue series we included Palestinian representatives.

The Palestinians joined us for the first time in Switzerland. By that time we had learned that by dividing the participants and facilitators into small groups, we could obtain better results. I was in charge of one small group. A young Palestinian physician from Gaza happened to sit next to retired Israeli Major General Shlomo Gazit. General Gazit was an Israeli hero due to his participation in the Six-day War, and Defense Minister Moshe Dayan had given him the authority to run the political, security and economic affairs of the newly captured territories. I noticed that the Palestinian physician was nervous. I could understand how difficult it was for him to sit next to a former Israeli general as an equal in a neutral country. He turned to General Gazit and said that he did not like living under Israeli occupation. He then explained that General Gazit, who was the first Israeli General assigned to run the Gaza strip, was a man with high integrity. Because of this the Palestinian physician respected Gazit. He continued by saying that after General Gazit all other Israeli generals who were assigned to

Gaza were “bad’ administrators who had caused increased shame, humiliation and helplessness among Palestinians in Gaza.

As he was talking I noticed that the Palestinian physician had put his right hand into the right pocket of his trousers. I could see the frantic movements of his fingers under the cloth. I thought that sitting next to General Gazit had induced castration anxiety in him and that he was touching his penis in order to be sure it was not castrated. But then the Palestinian physician, almost screaming, declared: “As long as I have this, you cannot take my Palestinian identity from me.” When I inquired what “this” was, I learned the following: He had a little stone in his pocket painted with Palestinian colors. We learned that Palestinians in Gaza at that time carried little stones such as this in their pockets. Whenever they saw Israeli soldiers or felt humiliated and threatened by Israelis, they would put their fingers in their pockets and touch the stones. This way they would know that their Palestinian identity still existed.

After working with Arab and Israeli representatives for six and a half years I was involved, as the leader of an interdisciplinary team, in bringing together other groups in conflict for years-long unofficial dialogues: representatives from the United States and the Soviet Union, Russia and Estonia, Serbia and Croatia, Georgia and South Ossetia, and others. I noticed that this abstract thing called large-group identity occupies the central role in international relations. Large groups, usually with the guidance or manipulation of political leaders, will do anything to protect, maintain and repair their large-group identities, even if such activities include massive extreme sadism as well as extreme masochism. When

large-group identities are threatened, the personality organization of the political leader, even in democracies, becomes a major factor in giving adaptive or maladaptive direction to large-groups' movements. When the large-group identity is threatened, subgroups and dissenters within a large group do not substantially change how large groups react and deal with "others" who are foreign to them.

Large-group psychology in its own right

Large groups do not have one brain to think with or two eyes to cry. When thousands or millions of members of a large group share a defense mechanism or a psychological journey, what we see are societal, cultural and political processes that are specific for the large group under study. Large-group psychology in its own right can be examined and theories about it can be developed by finding the shared mental phenomena that initiate such specific societal, cultural and political processes. In order to illustrate and explain this I will focus on three areas: large-group regression, large-group externalizations/projections and large-group mourning. All three areas are connected with the concept of large-group identity. A large group regresses when there is a shared threat or harm done to large-group identity, and it utilizes massive externalizations/projections in order to strengthen the large-group identity and it mourns when various types of losses are associated with harm to large-group identity.

Large-Group regression and the reactivation of a chosen trauma

In our daily clinical practice we see behavior patterns in our patients that can be explained by the concept of regression. We should ask how large-group regression exhibits itself. Kernberg (2003a, b) explains that regressed large groups experience narcissistic or paranoid reorganization. If we plan to develop strategies to deal with a specific large-group's regression and share them with diplomats and others, we need to be more specific. Elsewhere I came up with 20 tell-tale signs and symptoms of societal regression that a group can exhibit (Volkan 1988, 1997), ranging from rallying around a leader to preoccupation with certain identity markers, to exaggerating the significance of minor differences, to being involved in magical thinking. In this talk I will focus on one sign of large-group regression: the reactivation and inflaming of the mental representation of a past historical event.

When individuals regress, they “go back” and repeat their childhood experiences contaminated with unconscious fantasies and mental defenses and childhood ways of dealing with conflicts. The things they repeat are specific to them. When a large-group regresses, the large-group also “goes back,” reactivates and inflames certain mental representations of its ancestors' history, events that may have occurred decades or centuries ago. I named such shared mental representations of history “chosen traumas” and “chosen glories.” They are “chosen” to become key large-group identity markers and sentiments about chosen glories and chosen traumas are often mixed.

Chosen glories refer to shared mental representations of a historical event and heroic persons attached to them that are heavily mythologized over time. Chosen

glories are passed on to succeeding generations through transgenerational transmissions made in parent/teacher-child interactions and through participation in ritualistic ceremonies recalling past successful events. Chosen glories link children of a large group with each other and with their large group, and the children experience increased self-esteem by being associated with such glories.

While no complicated psychological processes are involved when chosen glories are reactivated, the reactivation of chosen traumas, in supporting large-group identity and its cohesiveness, is more complex. *Chosen traumas*—shared mental representations of ancestors' traumas *at the hands of "others"*—are more complicated, and stronger, large-group amplifiers.

After a massive trauma at the hands of others who have a different large-group identity, members of a large group experience a combination of the following shared experiences (Volkan 2006, 2009).

- 1-Sense of shame and humiliation,
- 2-Sense of victimization and feeling dehumanized,
- 3- Sense of guilt for surviving while others perished,
- 4- Inability to be assertive,
- 5- Increase in externalizations/projections,
- 6- Exaggeration of "bad" prejudice,
- 7- Increase in narcissistic investment in large-group identity,

8- Envy toward the victimizer and (defensive) identification with the oppressor,

9- Difficulty, or often inability, to mourn losses.

When such shared psychological experiences continue and the members of a large group cannot find adaptive solutions for them, they become involved in the next shared experience:

10- Shared transgenerational transmission of psychological tasks to deal with the influence of the trauma.

Massive trauma after natural disasters such as earthquakes—unless they directly or indirectly become connected with harm by others who belong to another large-group identity—do not induce shame, humiliation or dehumanization, and their consequences have different shared psychology. Attempts to complete unfinished psychological tasks associated with the ancestor's trauma at the hands of others are handed down from generation to generation. All these tasks are associated with the shared mental representation of the same event and eventually this mental representation evolves as a most significant large-group identity marker, a chosen trauma.

Not all past massive tragedies at the hands of others evolve as chosen traumas. We see the mythologizing of victimized heroes and hear moving stories associated with a trauma popularized in songs and poetry, and we see political leaders of later times create a preoccupation with a past trauma and related events, turning this historic event into a chosen trauma. Recently Polish President Lech Kaczynski and others were killed in an airplane crash on their

way to a ceremony during the anniversary of the Katyn Forest massacre of Polish nationals by Russians that occurred in April-May, 1940. I believe that this plane crash will play a role in turning the Katyn massacre into a chosen trauma.

More than a child's identification with traumatized adults, the concept of "depositing" self- and object images into the self-representation of a child explains how transgenerational transmission of trauma occurs in chosen traumas (Volkan 1987; Volkan, Ast, and Greer 2002). Depositing is closely related to "identification" in childhood, but it is in some ways significantly different from identification. In identification, the child is the primary active partner in taking in and assimilating object images and related ego and superego functions from another person. In depositing, the other, the adult person, more actively pushes his or her specific self- and internalized object images into the developing self-representation of the child. In other words, the other person uses the child (mostly unconsciously) as a permanent reservoir for certain self- and object images belonging to that adult. The experiences that created these mental images in the adult are not accessible to the child; yet, those mental images are pushed into the child, without the experiential/contextual framework which created them. Memories belonging to one person cannot be transmitted to another person, but an adult can deposit his or her traumatized self- and object images into a child's self-representation and assign ego tasks to such internal images. Judith Kestenberg's term (1982) "transgenerational transportation," I believe, refers to depositing traumatized images. It is related to a well-known concept in individual psychology called "projective identification" (Klein 1946).

Depositing in the large-group psychology, however, refers to a process shared by thousands or millions, starts in childhood and becomes like a “psychological DNA,” creating a sense of belonging.

Tasks that are given to deposited self- and object images change into functions (Waelder 1930) that connect members of the new generation with one another, and chosen glories and traumas evolve as key large-group identity markers. Each chosen trauma or chosen glory belongs to only one specific group. These identity markers continue to exist for centuries. In “normal” times they can be ritualistically recalled at the anniversary of the original event. Greeks link themselves when they share the “memory” of the fall of Constantinople (Istanbul) to the Turks in 1453; Russians recall the “memory” of the Tatar invasion centuries ago; Czechs commemorate the 1620 battle of Bila Hora, which led to their subjugation under the Hapsburg Empire for nearly 300 years; Scots keep alive the story of the battle of Culloden of 1746 and the failure of Bonnie Prince Charlie to restore a Stuart to the British throne; the Dakota people of the United States recall the anniversary of their decimation at Wounded Knee in 1890; and Crimean Tatars define themselves by the collective suffering of their deportation from Crimea in 1944. Israelis and Jews around the globe, including those not personally affected by the Holocaust, all to some degree define their large-group identity by direct or indirect reference to the Holocaust. The Holocaust is still too “hot” to be considered a truly established chosen trauma as described in this paper, but it already has become a large-group marker, even though Orthodox Jews still refer to the 586 BC destruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem by

Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylonia as the chosen trauma of the Jews. Some chosen traumas are difficult to detect because they are not simply connected to one well-recognized historical event. For example, the Estonians' chosen trauma is not related to one specific event, but to the fact that they had lived under almost constant dominance (Swedes, Germans, Russians) for thousands of years.

When enemy representatives get together for unofficial diplomatic dialogues they become spokespersons for their large groups. When one side feels humiliated they reactivate their chosen traumas, usually contaminated with chosen glories. For example, while discussing current international affairs, Russians might begin to focus on the Tatar invasion or Greeks may refer to the loss of Constantinople. When such images of past historical events are reactivated within a large group, a “time collapse” occurs. Shared perceptions, feelings, and thoughts about a past historical image become intertwined with perceptions, feelings and thoughts about current events. This magnifies the present danger. Unless a way is found to deal with the time collapse, routine diplomatic efforts will most likely fail. Today’s extreme Muslim religious fundamentalists have reactivated numerous chosen traumas and glories. We need to study and understand them in order to develop new and hopefully more effective strategies for a peaceful world.

Large-group externalizations/projections as purifications

We are familiar with a person's externalizing his or her unacceptable self- and object images or projecting unacceptable thoughts or affects onto another person. This creates a personal negative prejudice. If we want to develop a large-group psychology in its own right and understand at least one key aspect of societal prejudice, we must try to understand what happens when a large-group uses externalization and projection. When a large group finds itself asking questions such as "Who are we now?" or "How do we define our large-group identity now?"—usually following a revolution, a war, or freedom after a long oppression by "others," or even after economic trauma for which others are blamed—it purifies its large-group identity from unwanted elements. Such purifications stand for large-group externalizations and projections.

After the Greek struggle for independence, Greeks purified their language of all Turkish words. After Latvia gained its independence from the Soviet Union, its people wanted to get rid of some 20 "Russian" bodies in their national cemetery. There are non-dangerous as well as genocidal purifications. Understanding the meaning and psychological necessity of purifications can help to develop strategies to keep shared prejudices within "normal" limits and from becoming destructive.

Large-group mourning

Large groups, like some individuals, also exhibit complicated and perennial mourning (Volkan 1981) after losses caused by the actions of others belonging

to another large-group identity. Mourning in large groups connects itself with losing “normal” narcissistic investment in large-group identity. As a response, large-group narcissism can be defensively exaggerated. An *exaggerated large-group narcissism* describes a process within a large group when people in it become preoccupied and obsessed with the superiority of almost anything connected with their large-group identity, even when such perceptions and beliefs are not realistic. A society's assimilation of chronic victimhood and utilization of a sense of suffering in order secretly to feel superior, or at least entitled to attention, represent the existence of a *masochistic large-group narcissism*. *Malignant large-group narcissism* explains the initiation of a process in a large group when members of that large group wish to oppress or kill “others” either within or outside their legal boundaries, a process motivated by a shared spoken or unspoken notion that contamination by the devalued “others” is threatening their superiority.

As the narcissistic investment in the large-group identity is modified, the large group may develop what I call political entitlement ideologies—a shared sense of entitlement to recover what has been lost in reality and fantasy. Holding on to such an ideology reflects a complication in large-group mourning, an attempt both to deny losses as well as a wish to recover them, and a narcissistic reorganization. Each large group's entitlement ideology is specific. Some entitlement ideologies are known by specific names in the diplomatic literature. What Italians call irredentism (related to *Italia Irredenta*), what Greeks call the “Megali Idea” (Great Idea), what Turks call Pan-Turanism, what extreme religious

Islamists of today call “the return of an Islamic Empire” and what Nancy Hollander (2010) called “American exceptionalism” after September 11, 2001 are examples of entitlement ideologies. Such ideologies may last for centuries and may disappear and reappear when historical circumstances change and chosen traumas are activated. They contaminate diplomatic negotiations. They may result in changing the world map in peaceful or, unfortunately too often, dreadful ways.

Making a formulation about what exists within a large-group psychology

What I have said above about large-group regression, externalization/projection and mourning can be summarized in the following schema:

Massive Trauma at the hands of “Others”

⇓

Depositing and Transgenerational Transmission

⇓

Change of Function

⇓

Chosen Trauma: Large-Group Identity Marker

(a *psychological gene* of the large group)

⇓

Reactivation of Chosen Trauma and Entitlement Ideology



Enhancement of Leader-Follower Interaction



Time Collapse



Entitlement for Revenge or Re-victimization



Increased Prejudice and Magnification of Current Large-Group Conflict



“Irrational” Decision-Making



Tendency for Purification and Mobilization of Destructive Large-Group Activities

Using this schema we can make a formulation about what exists within a large group’s psychology just as we make a formulation about the internal world of a patient who comes to us for analysis. Making a formulation about a patient’s internal world is necessary for good analysis because it gives us direction about what we will be treating. Similarly making a formulation about what exists in the psychology of a large group can give us directions to help those dealing with that large group to develop helpful strategies.

Following the above schema, we can understand a significant aspect of what happened after the former Yugoslavia collapsed. The shared mental representation of the Battle of Kosovo which occurred more than 600 years ago has been the Serbian chosen trauma, a key Serbian ethnic identity marker. It was reactivated by Slobodan Milosevic and persons around him from the Serbian church and Serbian universities. It enhanced the leader-followers relationship and was contaminated with the inflammation of the Serbian entitlement ideology known by political scientists as Christoslavism. This resulted in a time collapse and the Bosnians (Muslims) in the former Yugoslavia were perceived as the Ottoman Turks who were the Serbians' enemies during the Battle of Kosovo. The result was a genocidal purification. I told the story of these events in details elsewhere (Volkan 1997).

Last words

Besides the issues that are originally connected with chosen traumas, entitlement ideologies and their reactivations, other specific psychological processes are present within a large group. These processes, such as circumstances that increase the need to have enemies, shared transference expectations from a political leader, a political leader's utilization of the large-group arena for finding solutions for personal conflicts, also require formulations. Because of the reality that many factors in large-group psychology stand side by side and complicate the situation, any attempt to understand large groups or societies is very difficult (Shapiro and Carr 2006). But, like John Alderdice (2010),

I have become convinced that our psychoanalytical perspective has a contribution to make. Such studies will expand our knowledge both in clinical and international affairs.

On the clinical level as we analyze individuals, psychoanalytic work on international relations expands our clinical knowledge about the intertwining of external and internal wars, the connections between individual and large-group prejudices, and intergenerational transmissions of shared massive traumas. The analyst needs to learn and examine his or her “foreign” patients’ or immigrants’ large-group histories and the psychological processes that such histories might initiate.

In the international relations arena, the same studies raise the following basic question: Can psychoanalysis offer serious information about international relations and help to develop strategies for peace in areas where attempts are made to utilize it. My answer is “yes.” Time does not permit me to share with you what my interdisciplinary colleagues and I have done over the last three decades in this area, such as finding ways to create a “time expansion” between current conditions and mental representations of past historical events in order to help the enemies in a dialogue have more realistic discussions. Enemies are both real and fantasized (Stein 1988). When the fantasy aspect of the enemy is removed real dangers can be dealt with more effectively.

Wars or war-like situations do not start because of large-group psychology. But after they begin, especially after they become chronic, large-group psychology

contaminates economic, legal, military and other “real world’ issues. Over the last three years, John Alderdice, Edward Shapiro, Gerard Fromm and I, as psychoanalysts, with the help of persons such as Ford Rowan whom I introduced to you at the beginning of my talk, have been bringing together interdisciplinary representatives from Israel, Iran, Turkey, Arab Emirates, Jordon, Germany, England, Russia and the United States in order to understand our present globalized and turbulent world.

This year we are celebrating the 100th year of the founding of the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA). Despite our professional anxieties about the future of psychoanalysis, the teaching and the practice of our profession under the umbrella of the IPA is now reaching new countries such as Korea, Turkey and China. This itself suggests that we will be required to understand different cultures and specific aspects of their large-group psychologies. With today’s talk I hoped to share my view that if we choose to collaborate with professionals from different disciplines, such as diplomats, and be involved in international relations, such efforts will bring new excitement to psychoanalysis and make it, as a scientific field, more accessible and helpful in human affairs.

Thank you for listening to me.

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