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**PSYCHOANALYSIS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN PSYCHOANALYSIS**

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Uns Wissen Wollten
(What Psychotherapists Always Wanted to Know
About Themselves)**

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This chapter describes what I learned from my “unofficial” involvement in international relations and policies, and how the study of ethnic, national, religious or ideological large groups in turn influenced my clinical work with individuals.

The late Anwar Sadat, a political leader whom I never met, played a key role in my involvement in international relations and politics. He was president of Egypt from 1970 until his assassination in 1981. He had a personality organization infused with exaggerated self-esteem and self-reliance, which was reflected in his behavior in political and international arenas. Before making major decisions, he would go forty miles north of Cairo to his village, Mit Abul Kom, don a *galibia*, smoke a pipe, think, and then reach a decision. Certainly he was not modest; he considered his mind to be superior to the minds of those who might give him advice about political matters. He was a loner. His personality organization gave him the courage to take bold and unusual steps (Volkan, 2004). One of his unusual steps was to make a historic visit to Israel, the enemy territory, in 1977. There, he addressed the *Knesset* and declared that 70% of the problems between Arabs and Israelis were psychological. Subsequently, the American Psychiatric Association’s (APA) Committee on International Affairs developed plans to explore Sadat’s suggestion: to investigate the psychological aspects of Arab-Israeli relationships, to examine how certain ethnic sentiments create *resistance* to peaceful resolution of international conflicts and to devise ways of removing such resistance.

Between 1980 and 1986, I was involved in a series of unofficial Egyptian-Israeli dialogues (during the last three years of these dialogues, Palestinians were also present) as a member of the APA Committee. Because of this involvement I began shifting my

focus from understanding the individuals' internal worlds to large-group psychology, manipulations of mass movements, and "unofficial diplomacy." (Volkan, 1987)

In 1987, after my six years' involvement in the Arab-Israeli dialogue series, I organized the Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction (CSMHI) under the auspices of the University of Virginia School of Medicine, and directed it until my retirement in late 2002. Collectively and separately, the faculty of CSMHI has worked in many areas of the world where ethnic, racial, religious, or other large-group tensions and violence have existed or currently exist. (Volkan, 1988; 1997; 1999a, 2004)

Thus Anwar Sadat, whom I never met, changed the course of my career. Gradually, I left the traditional psychoanalyst's position (behind a couch) and began to participate—unofficially of course—in negotiating-table activities between enemy groups such as Arabs and Israelis, Russians and Estonians, Turks and Greeks, and Georgians and South Ossetians. As might be expected, my journey from the safety of my clinical office to the uncertainty of traumatized societies and the heat of intense negotiation was full of personal resistance. Taking a "trip" with a patient into his or her internal world from the psychoanalyst's usual seat behind the therapeutic couch is one thing; sitting down between enemy representatives who are hurling fiercely aggressive sentiments at one another, or standing among massively traumatized persons in situations of real and imminent danger, is quite another.

A psychoanalyst in his or her office is a somewhat lonely figure: he or she alone (although certainly with the analysand's input) assesses the patient's internal conflicts and adaptations and decides what to interpret and how to react. But being the "boss" of a situation, as a psychoanalyst is, can also be a narcissistically gratifying experience. Good

training in a reputable institution vaccinates against potential misuse of that position of “control” by solidifying the analyst’s personal and professional integrity and self-knowledge. But as soon as I began my involvement in international inter-ethnic and other large-group processes, I was no longer in control of the situations before me. In a sea of complicated conflicts, it was often difficult to simply sort out unfolding events, let alone figure out what hidden shared psychological processes were attached to them. Furthermore, I was, at times, rubbing elbows with world leaders and other major public figures—Mikhail Gorbachev, Jimmy Carter, Yassir Arafat, and Desmond Tutu. It was essential for me to work through the emotions and perceptions that associating, even if briefly, with such celebrities induced in me. How could I stay neutral? How could I tame my own prejudices? I had a great deal of internal work to do to adjust to my new “career.”

Several significant obstacles to collaboration between psychoanalysis and official diplomacy influenced my new “career.” Some of these obstacles came from the realm of political science and diplomacy, whereas others came from within psychoanalytic discipline itself.

Obstacles to collaboration between psychoanalysis and diplomacy

Given the pervasive influence of *Realpolitik* on governments, it is not surprising that politicians, diplomats or political scientists do not embrace psychoanalytic observations with open arms. Since Ludwig von Rochau (1853) introduced the concept of *realpolitik*, this idea has evolved, in general, to mean the rational evaluation and realistic assessment of the options available to one’s large group and its enemies without

considering psychological processes. Following the spectacular success of Realpolitik practitioner Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898), first Chancellor and architect of the German Empire, realism dominated political thinking for the next century. The international relations scholar, John A. Vasquez (1986), suggested that Realpolitik's tenacity in the twentieth century was a direct result of the failure of Woodrow Wilson and other "idealists" to prevent World War I:

[I]dealists were perceived as exaggerating the influence of reason by assuming a fundamental harmony of interests, when in fact, according to realists, there are often conflicts of interest that can only be resolved by a struggle for power (Vasquez, 1986, p. 2-3)

Though the idealist-realist debate persisted through the decades between the wars, the 1940s saw that dispute decisively resolved in favor of realism, which would dominate much Cold War-era theory and practice. Hans J. Morgenthau's 1948 work, *Politics Among Nations*, is especially recognized as widely influential in this period.

The influence of Realpolitik gave birth to what became known, especially in the United States, as *rational actor models* of politics and diplomacy. Eventually, shortcomings of various rational actor models became evident. For example, on Yom Kippur (October 6, 1973), Anwar Sadat surprised both Israeli and U.S. military intelligence by launching a massive attack on Israel across the Suez Canal. Based on rational actor models, policy analysts did not believe that an Egyptian offensive could be launched before 1975, and so regarded the Egyptian troop movements reported in September 1973 as mere exercises. Thus Egyptian forces were able to overrun poorly

manned Israeli defenses and drive deep into the Sinai, though Sadat's army ultimately suffered heavy losses before a cease-fire was declared later that year. Israel's air superiority and credible commitment to engage fully any attacker "should" have provided an effective deterrent, but Sadat was not deterred. Sadat's personality organization played a key role in the initiation of the Yom Kippur War. Accordingly, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, some political scientists and even some government decision-makers and diplomats began to borrow concepts from cognitive psychology to explain "faulty" decision-making (Volkan, et al, 1998). Still, they did not look to psychoanalysis for insights. Exploration of shared, unconscious forces was avoided despite a long history of attempts to introduce psychoanalysis into politics and diplomacy, including the efforts of Harold Lasswell (1927, 1930), a pioneer in the study of psychosocial warfare.

Other difficulties that complicate collaboration between psychoanalysts and practitioners and scholars of politics and international relations come from psychoanalysis itself. I sensed these difficulties myself as I became more and more involved in collaborative work with scholars and practitioners of other disciplines. I noted that the difficulties within psychoanalytic discipline that hindered collaboration between psychoanalysis and diplomacy could be divided into various inter-related categories. As expected, at first it was difficult for me to realize these obstacles and define them. But slowly I was able to "free" myself from some established psychoanalytic assumptions.

Politics and diplomacy necessarily deal with the psychology of large groups, the psychology of leader-followers, and the psychology of relationships between enemy groups and their leaders. Sigmund Freud was interested in these topics, but he also left a

legacy that discouraged his followers from pursuing them. In his letter to Albert Einstein, Freud (1932) was pessimistic about human nature and the role of psychoanalysis in preventing wars or war-like situations. Although Jacob Arlow (1973) later suggested some optimism in some of Freud's writings on this subject, Freud's pessimism, I believe, played a role in the limited psychoanalytic contributions to the fields of politics and diplomacy.

There were, of course, exceptions (Glower, 1947 and Fornari, 1966). However, those exceptions followed Freud's lead in another area, and this too blocked the potential influence of psychoanalysis on politics and diplomacy: these writers, like Freud, focused on individuals' unconscious perceptions of what the image of political leaders and the mental representations of a large group symbolically stand for, instead of on large-group psychology and leader-follower relations in their own right. Psychoanalysis remained primarily an investigative tool of an individual's internal world and massive human movements were examined according to individual psychology that brings people together and not according to the psychology of large-group rituals and interactions. It was all right to study the internal motivations of political leaders as they influence their followers, but psychoanalysis largely failed to consider how mental representations of societal processes influenced the personality development of individuals belonging to the same large group and changed that group's historical or political movements. Only relatively recently a handful of historians with psychoanalytic training are focusing on this phenomenon. For example, Peter Loewenberg (1991, 1995) described the history of the Weimer Republic, its humiliation and its economic collapse as a major factor in

creating shared personality characteristics among the German youth and their welcoming the Nazi ideology.

Freud's (1921) well-known theory of 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. In turn, the members of a large group idealize the leader, identify with each other, and rally around the leader. Freud's theory is based on a "male-oriented" psychological process. More importantly, as Waelder (1971) noted, Freud was speaking only of *regressed* groups. Given such shortcomings, some psychoanalysts who study large groups and their leaders shifted their approach in the last decade or so from emphasizing the image of the leader to focusing on the mental representation of the large group itself as experienced by the individual. For example, Didier Anzieu (1971, 1984) Janine Chassequet-Smirgel (1984), and Otto Kernberg (1980, 1989) wrote about shared fantasies of members of a large group. They suggested that large groups represent idealized mothers (breast mothers) who repair all narcissistic injuries. I, (Volkan, 2004) added that idealized but unintegrated self images accompany idealized mother images in members' experience of the large group in which they belong. But, again, these theories primarily focus on individuals' perceptions. It is assumed that external processes that threaten the group members' image of an idealized mother can initiate political processes and influence international affairs. Nevertheless, an approach that focuses on individuals' perceptions does not offer *specificity* concerning a political or diplomatic process. Thus, it does not excite practitioners of politics and diplomacy or receive much attention from political scientists.

I came to realize that what the psychoanalytic tradition lacks is the study of both large-group psychology in its own right and the specific elements of various mass movements.

I also came to realize another phenomenon that, in reality, should be obvious to all of us. But, it is not. Psychoanalysts usually have an “illusion” that because they went through their personal analyses and read and studied psychoanalytic theory that explains individuals’ internal worlds, they are free of prejudice in international relations and politics. The reality is that a future analyst’s personal analysis usually does not include a full exploration of the analysand’s ethnic, national, or religious affiliations. Unless the psychoanalyst-to-be suffers from malignant prejudice or paranoia, his or her large-group sentiments are not brought up on the couch. The human “need to have enemies and allies” (Volkan, 1988) in a large-group context is not discussed. We also know that analysts and analysands often shy away from addressing sensitive large-group issues. Some aspects of a large-group history induce “anxiety” (Loewenberg 1991; Rangell 2003). For example, an analyst who is a survivor of the Holocaust may resist exploring the transgenerational transmission of trauma in an analyzand who is a child of other survivors or of Jewish persons affected by the Holocaust (Blum, 1985). During the last two decades, I have had many opportunities to supervise young German psychoanalysts who resisted bringing their German analysands’ Nazi-connected family history to the couch (Volkan, Ast and Greer, 2002). Similarly, when reading Israeli and Arab psychoanalysts’ writings on the Middle East conflict (Varvin and Volkan, 2003), we cannot escape noticing that when it comes to ethnic, national, religious or even ideological sentiments, psychoanalysts—like politicians, diplomats, and just about everyone else—may exhibit prejudices and respond to propaganda and manipulations by

political leaders. To evaluate international processes and leader-follower relations correctly takes experience in the international field and the difficult “working through” of the meaning and functions of large-group sentiments. Otherwise, there will be contamination with prejudicial affects that change perceptions.

More than 25 years ago, I wrote a book on the conflict between Cypriot Greeks and Cypriot Turks (I belong to the second group); the subtitle of my book was: “A Study of *Two* Ethnic Groups in Conflict” [emphasis added] (Volkan, 1976). Looking back, I must admit that I had no deep knowledge of the suffering on the Greek side and, indeed, had no wish to know about their experiences and perceptions of events.

A few months after I arrived in the United States in 1957 to specialize in psychiatry (and later in psychoanalysis), my roommate from my medical school days in Ankara, Turkey, who was like a brother to me, was murdered by the then Cypriot Greek EOKA terrorists, who were seeking to create a new Greek island by terrorizing the British and the Turks in Cyprus. My personal analysis, by a Jewish-American psychoanalyst, did not examine my “survivor guilt” (Niederland, 1968). I do not know if my analyst had relatives who were survivors of the Holocaust and if this had played a role in his not exploring my survivor guilt. One day, after my personal analysis finished, I realized that I could not remember my roommate’s name. I knew then that this “not remembering” was a symptom and I began to wonder about it on and off. It was twenty some years after my roommate’s death that one day, while dining in a restaurant in Northern Cyprus, I was told that the bartender was my dead friend’s younger brother. I walked to the bar and introduced myself to this man. Spontaneously both of us began to cry. I could, after this event, mourn the loss of my roommate and more freely invest in

unofficial peace negotiations between Cypriot Greeks and Cypriot Turks, or Greeks and Turks in general.

Freud himself has left us some evidence that when it comes to large-group issues, psychoanalysts have prejudices, and this, I believe, is an obstacle to their suggesting practical solutions for ethnic or religious problems—even though they try to be neutral. In his correspondence with Albert Einstein, Freud (1932) made “racist” remarks about Turks and Mongols. He also jokingly referred to his patients as “Negroes” (Tate, 1996). These were not necessarily vicious or hateful attacks, and racism in general was prevalent—and to a great degree, accepted—in Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Freud may have identified with the aggressor in an attempt to defend against mounting anti-Semitism, but his remarks nevertheless should serve to remind psychoanalysts that our own personal analyses, self analyses, and extensive study and training in human nature do not free us from investment in certain cultural norms, the attitudes of our own large group, or even racism.

There was still another obstacle that made my work with other scholars interested in large-group processes difficult, and I had to work on it. Most psychoanalysts—I think I am among them—are knowledgeable about how small therapy groups work; others have written about the psychology of organizations composed of hundreds of individuals (for example, see: Foulkes and Anthony, 1957; Bion, 1961; Abse, 1974; and Zaleznick, 1984). They then tend to apply these insights to religious, national or ethnic groups that may include millions of individuals. Large groups, such as ethnic groups, have their own specific psychological processes (Volkan, 1988, 1977, 1999, and 2004). In their clinical practices, psychoanalysts learn the histories and psychic realities of their individual

patients. Often, however, they are not sufficiently familiar with the histories of large groups and tend to treat large groups as they would treat individuals with psychopathology. Following Otto Fenichel's (1935) concern about uncritical expansion of psychoanalytic interpretation into areas that are not amenable to direct psychoanalytic observation, Alexander Mitscherlich (1971) emphasized the need to work closely with those in other scientific disciplines. Such collaborative studies are always exceptions in psychoanalytic work, however. Accordingly, such studies suffer from a lack of in-depth historical knowledge and related issues and cannot illuminate specific areas that interest politicians and diplomats. To deal with this problem, when I established CSMHI within the Medical School of the University of Virginia, I invited high-level (former) diplomats, political scientists, historians and others to join the Center as appointed faculty, to work alongside the psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, psychologists and other mental health professionals.

My pessimism and optimism

Thus far I have focused on the difficulties that faced me in my attempts to contribute to the field of diplomacy. These problems need to be acknowledged. Before proceeding further, I must say that I agree with most psychoanalytic conceptualizations about individuals' perceptions of what images of leaders and large groups signify to them. Like Freud, I am pessimistic about psychoanalytic contributions to the understanding, and especially the solution, of large-group conflicts, massive aggression,

and destruction and to diminishing the derivatives of aggression within human nature. Incredible technological achievements are also constantly used for massive destructions. In spite of attempts at democratization of the so-called undeveloped societies, the various political systems come and go, and having a democratic state is no guarantee against “solutions” for conflicts by means of wars or war-like conditions. I know that during my lifetime I will not see a peaceful world, and I do believe humans will continue to kill and maim other human beings. My long-time colleague and assistant director of CSMHI, psychiatrist J. Anderson Thomson (2003) always reminds us that we are descendents of killer apes.

On the other hand, I am optimistic about using psychoanalytic insights and concepts to deal with and modify certain *specific and limited* international situations. For this to happen, psychoanalysts must be willing to work with historians, political scientists, diplomats and others within an established team. The first thing to do is to rise above the competition between the disciplines in order to establish a true team spirit. It is also imperative that people from different disciplines be willing to work together for many years in long-term projects and processes (just as psychoanalysts are involved with their analysands), focusing on specific “conflicts” (see “Tree Model,” Volkan, 1999b).

In order to understand specific and limited aspects of diplomacy, I need to focus on the concept of *large-group identity*. Along with real world issues such as economic, legal and military ones, diplomatic efforts primarily center around injuries to large-group identity, difficulty in mourning losses (losses of people, land or prestige), and attempts to repair the damage inflicted on large-group identity.

Large-group identity

My concept of large-group identity evolved from my observations during dialogues that continued for many years between high-level officials and scholars of opposing groups (for example, Georgians and South Ossetians or Russians and Estonians). During such meetings, representatives of each antagonistic group became spokespersons for their specific large-group processes and expressions of “we-ness.” I also spent considerable time with various world leaders when they were actively protecting their large-groups’ identities and trying to repair injuries to the shared sense of “we-ness” of the group to which they belonged. Furthermore, my colleagues from CSMHI and I conducted in-depth interviews with hundreds and hundreds of individuals from traumatized societies or refugee camps. These interviews included collecting data from fantasies and dreams. In such societies, the shared sense of “we-ness” increases and what is a large-group identity becomes describable. Before I explain more of what I mean by large-group identity, let me turn my attention to Freud’s theory about large groups.

We can visualize the classical Freudian theory about large groups and their leaders by imagining people gathered around a large Maypole, which represents the group’s leader, as if joined in a May Day dance of identification with each other and of idealization and support of the leader. We can build upon this metaphor by imagining a large cloth over the people, a “tent canvas” of large-group identity. Following Erik Erikson’s (1956) description of individual identity, we can describe the large-group identity of tens of thousands, or even millions, of people—most of whom will never meet each other in their lifetimes—who share a persistent sense of sameness (we-ness) while also sharing some characteristics with people who live under other tents. While people

under a large-group tent are divided into subgroups (clans, occupations, religious sects and so on), they wear the tent canvas as a shared garment. If the tent shakes—especially due to threats or attacks from “others”—or the tent’s pole becomes unsteady (the leader is taken ill or dies), and if there is significant wear-and-tear on the cloth, group identity becomes even more important to the people. It may even become their primary garment, eclipsing their usual individual garments (their personal identities).

From a large-group psychological, political and diplomatic perspective, the psychoanalyst’s focus should not be on personal perceptions that the pole represents an Oedipal father or that the tent canvas is like a nurturing mother combined with individuals’ unintegrated idealized self images. Rather, analysts should focus on large-group identity, its formation and the group’s need to protect it at any cost. People rally around the leader so that the pole keeps the tent canvas erect. The main purpose of the leader becomes the protection of large-group identity; this influences political and diplomatic processes. Psychoanalytic consultations may help develop useful strategies (for example, third party neutrals could shore up opposing camps’ large-group identities during negotiations when proposed solutions are perceived as threats to such identities).

Sharing the tent canvas as a common garment connects multitudes of people and may dominate their individual psychological processes. It is difficult to understand the psychology of suicide bombers unless we see them as “spokespersons” for their large-group identity, doing what they think is necessary to maintain that identity. When the large-group identity is threatened, consideration for individual lives becomes secondary. In our routine lives, we are not necessarily aware of our connections with our large-group processes. We do not wake up each morning feeling intensely German, American, or

Uzbek. Belonging to a large group does not necessarily elicit overwhelming feelings of patriotism, for example, each time we see our nation's flag. In our routine daily lives we are more concerned with subgroups under the test: families or professional organizations, for example. Our relationship with our large-group identity, in ordinary times, is like breathing. While we breathe constantly, we do not usually notice it unless our ability to breathe is threatened, such as if we have pneumonia or are caught in a smoke-filled house on fire. When representatives of enemy groups come together, they often react as if they have entered a burning building. Psychoanalytic insights can be used to bring in fresh air so that conflicts and misunderstandings may be resolved, thus paving the way for successful negotiations.

In order to provide fresh air and not add fuel to the fire, analysts need to study what types of components/threads are woven into the tent canvasses of the involved parties. Some "threads" tell us how individual and large-group identities are interwoven: we have a great deal of information on how certain early identifications with the adults around us connect our personal identities with our large-group identities. I will not focus on identification and other concepts that connect individual and large group identities in this brief chapter (see Volkan, 1999a and 1999b for extensive explanations). Instead, I will discuss two "threads" that bring specificity to each ethnic, national and religious tent canvas. Political leaders instinctively know how to focus on these two elements, to use them for political propaganda and for political movements. I call them "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas."

Chosen glories are mental representations of a large group's past triumphs and the heroes and martyrs associated with them (Volkan, 1988, 1997, 2004). They induce a

heightened sense of “we-ness.” During the Gulf War, for instance, Saddam Hussein tried to galvanize his followers by associating himself with Sultan Saladin, who defeated the Christian Crusaders in the twelfth century, thus reviving a glorious event from the past and its hero. Chosen glories are passed from generation to generation through caretaker-child interactions and by participating in ceremonies that recall the past success.

However, they influence large-group identity less pervasively than chosen traumas because the latter bring with them powerful experiences of loss and shared feelings of humiliation, vengeance and hatred.

A chosen trauma is the shared mental representation of a negative event in a large group’s history in which the group suffered catastrophic loss, humiliation and helplessness at the hand of another large group. There are countless clinical investigations of members of large groups that have suffered massive trauma from the actions of an enemy group; there are also many investigations of the second and third generations of a group that has been inflicted with overwhelming trauma. These investigations clearly show how the mental representations of a shared tragedy are transmitted to subsequent generations in varying levels of intensity. (See Volkan, Ast and Greer, 2002, for a selected review of the literature on the transmission of Holocaust images.)

There is far more to the transmission of chosen trauma than children mimicking the behavior of their parents or hearing stories about the event as told by the older generations. Rather, it is the end result of mostly unconscious psychological processes through which survivors *deposit* into their progeny’s core identities their own injured self-images. Thus, the parent’s injured self-image “lives on” in the child. Then the parent

(now within the child, so to speak) unconsciously assigns to the child specific tasks of reparation that rightfully belong to the survivor (i.e., to reverse shame and humiliation, turn passivity to activity, tame the sense of aggression, and mourn the losses associated with the trauma). Since all the injured self-images that individual parents in a traumatized group transmit to their children refer to the same event, a shared image of the tragedy develops. By sharing this image of their ancestors' trauma, succeeding generations are unconsciously knit together.

Over time, the mental representations of the original trauma, now highly mythological, become a crucial "thread" of the tent canvas. When enemy representatives come together for negotiations, they inevitably reactivate their chosen traumas (as well as their chosen glories, but to a much lesser degree) in order to deal with the anxiety concerning the threats against their large-group identity. For example, during unofficial talks with Estonians, Russians would recall centuries of being attacked and occupied by the Mongols, or the Nazi period when they suffered disproportionate losses and sacrifices to protect the "civilized" world. The appearance of preoccupation with chosen traumas while negotiating current issues may confuse negotiators and third-party neutrals. Psychoanalytic insights about chosen traumas and why they appear at certain times—to protect large-group identity—can be useful in putting the negotiations back on track.

Usually it is succeeding generations of a victim's large group that are affected by the chosen trauma. There are, however, occasions when the victimizer also cannot mourn the losses or overcome the shame associated with a past event. In Germany, for example, the shadow of the Nazi era and the German people's complicity in the Holocaust continue to influence how many individuals and Germans as a group conceive of themselves

today. As the Mitscherlichs (1975) observed, the inability of previous generations of Germans to mourn this period involves a shared defense against identification and association with the Third Reich and feelings of shame for its atrocities. (For reference to such findings, see: Volkan, Ast and Greer, 2002).

Under “normal” political and social conditions, chosen traumas are recalled during the anniversary of the original event, and the ritualistic commemoration helps bind the members of the large group together. Examples are numerous. Czechs commemorate the battle of Bila Hora in 1620, which led to their subjugation under the Hapsburg Empire for nearly 300 years. Scots keep alive the story of the battle of Culloden in 1746 and the failure of Bonnie Prince Charlie to restore a Stuart to the throne. The Lakota Indians 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. Although these rituals of remembering may invoke individual and group memories associated with historical events, past and present remain distinct and separate.

When political leaders reactivate a large group’s chosen trauma through political propaganda, related emotions and perceptions are experienced as if the trauma were a recent occurrence and it becomes fused with the emotions and perceptions related to current political, diplomatic and/or military issues. (See Volkan, 1997, for the story of how Slobodan Milosevic and his group reactivated the Serbian chosen trauma after the collapse of Yugoslavia.) They may even be projected into the future. What is “remembered” from the past is felt in the present and is anticipated for the future, coming together in a *time collapse*.

Time collapse is accompanied by large-group regression. Large groups regress when the large-group identity is threatened and/or damaged. Psychoanalysts have identified certain signs and symptoms of this regression, such as blind rallying around a leader, group members' loss of individual identity, the development of a "shared morality," and the group's increasingly primitive and absolutist belief system. Those persons perceived to be in conflict with the group are labeled as "them" (versus "us") creating a sharp division between the group and the enemy. In addition, new findings on signs and symptoms of large-group regression (Volkan, 2004) include the reactivation of the group's chosen glories and traumas, the group's experiencing of legal and geographical boundaries as a "second skin," and group concerns about "blood" (identity as a people). More importantly, regressed groups are involved in certain rituals, some of which, if not diagnosed and dealt with constructively, (perhaps with the help of outside neutral parties), may lead to malignant developments. For example, during the regression and during efforts to relieve the regression, a regressed group becomes like a snake shedding its skin. In a sense, the regressed group asks: "Who are we now?" and is intent on getting rid of unacceptable elements "contaminating" its identity. I call this obligatory group ritual *purification*. Purification may be benign, such as removing foreign words from the group's language, or may be deadly, such as so-called ethnic cleansing. Again, there is a large-group psychology in such activities that can be illuminated by psychoanalysts who are willing to work in the field.

From diplomacy to clinical work

My intense involvement in international relations, working with refugees and noticing massive sadistic and masochistic movements, I believe, influenced my clinical practice. First of all, I became more aware of the derivatives of aggression in human development and began to pay more attention to them. I now notice more easily *actual* traumas in many of my patients' early lives and the role such actual traumas play in initiating murderous unconscious fantasies in these individuals. At the same time, I became more tolerant when my analyzands made me the target of their aggression, in open or hidden ways, in their transference relationship to me. I am more able to "play" with patients' aggressive expressions and as a result, I believe, I am more helpful to them as they learn how to "play" with their aggressive expressions and tame them.

I am no longer surprised at how so many people are carriers of their ancestors' traumatized images. I started to pay attention to my patients' ancestors' histories and to connect some aspects of my patients' personality characteristics and/or symptoms to what had been "deposited" into them by their ancestors. Obviously, I am not alone in focusing on ancestors' histories. Analysts who treated Holocaust survivors and their children have been speaking of this phenomenon for decades (See a review in Volkan, Ast and Greer, 2002). But, I think there are only a handful of analysts who are focusing on history (as historians define it) and its connections to almost all of their patients. (Also see: Davoine and Gaudillière, 2004).

I also noticed when patients' resistance to analysis is connected to trans-generational transmission of trauma. When an adult, who has been a reservoir of deposited images, comes to analysis, his or her resistance to the analytic process and "getting well" will, at one time or another, center around his or her facing the possibility

of ceasing to function as a reservoir, or at least modifying this condition, and thus changing his or her sense of identity. To discard or modify what is deposited into one's self-representation initiates anxiety concerning a change in one's personal identity, losing the love and connection with the representation of a mother or other caretaker who was the depositor, and even "killing" the depositor. Thus, a resistance to "getting well" surfaces.

In the past, the concept of "depositing" images could be best illustrated when we examined the so-called "replacement children" (Cain and Cain, 1964; Poznanski, 1972; Volkan and Ast, 1997). A mother has internalized the former image of her dead child. She deposits this image into the developing self-representation of her second child, usually born after the first child's death. The second child, the replacement child, has no actual experience of the dead sibling and has no image of him or her. The mother, who has the image of the dead child, treats the second one as a reservoir where the dead child can be kept "alive." Accordingly, the mother gives the second child certain ego tasks to protect and maintain what is deposited in him or her. Obviously, the replacement child also develops his or her own ego functions in dealing with what has been pushed into him or her. For example, the replacement child will be preoccupied with the task of integrating the deposited image with the rest of his or her self representation. The child may or may not succeed in doing so.

In my unofficial international diplomacy work, again and again, I was exposed to references to or reactivations of a large group's chosen traumas. This in turn made me aware of how often a caretaker's traumatized self and object images or the family's "*mini* chosen traumas" are deposited into a child's developing self representation in the same

manner that a mother passes her dead child's image to her living second child. Deposited traumatized self and object images function like "psychological genes." The person who has them may be doomed to perform his or her parents' caretakers' or ancestors' unfinished mourning, associated with a trauma that occurred before his or her lifetime. Or the person becomes preoccupied with activities that attempt to reverse helplessness and humiliation or repair some aspects of the injured images that he or she carries within. Obviously, noticing such psychological processes is helpful in designing therapeutic strategies to deal with them (Volkan, Ast and Greer, 2002).

Conclusion

This chapter describes my resistance to moving out of my office and observing at close range human aggression at work in societies in conflict. It also illustrates how difficult it is to break off from or modify one's profession's established theories and norms. In turn, my studies in the international arena has enriched my clinical work. In understanding and treating some of our patients, we need to keep in mind that there is a link between what we see in our offices and what happens in the historical arena. I hope that by bringing my findings from large-group psychology to individual psychology I am illustrating this link.

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