Psycho-social Aspects of Trauma and its Transmission in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina

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Abstract

Edkins's examples and comparisons which she cites in her explanation of the trauma also link to violence against the women. Authoress states that trauma happens when people who are closest to us betray us. There are several questions which she brings up in order to explain the term trauma such as: What is trauma? How does it happen? Are human beings subject to political trauma in everyday situation? How can we cope and overcome trauma? How can we live with the fact that we have experienced trauma in certain period of our life? Based on Edkins's trauma definition the purpose of this paper is to analyze psycho-social aspects of trauma and its transmission in post war Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Keywords: Trauma, Individual and Collective Trauma, Transmission, Socio-psychological Approach.

Bosna-Hersek'te Savaş Sonrasında Yaşanmış Felaketlerin Dönüşümü ve Psikolojik-Sosyal Yansımaları

Özet

Edkins'in yaşanmış felaketi açıklamak için kullandığı örnekler ve karşılaştırmalar kadınlara karşı şiddetle de bağlantılıdır. Yazara göre, felaketler kendimize yakın insanlar bizi aldattıklarında meydana gelir. Edkins felaket kavramını açıklayabilmek için bir dizi soru ortaya atmaktadır. Bu sorulardan bazıları; Felaket nedir ve nasıl meydana gelir? İnsanlar günlük hayatlarında siyasal felaketlere maruz kalırlar mı? Felaketleri nasıl aşarız? Hayatımızın belli bir döneminde felakete maruz kaldığımız gerçeğiyle nasıl yaşarız? Şeklindedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Edkins'in felaket kavramı temelinde savaş sonrası Bosna-Hersek'te yaşanmış felaketlerin psikolojik ve sosyal yansımalarını ve bunun dönüşümünü çözümlemektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Felaket, Bireysel ve Ortak Felaketler, Dönüşüm, Sosyal-Psikolojik Yaklaşım

This paper aims to investigate intersection of gender, trauma and its transmission in context of contemporary, postwar and post-transitional Bosnian-Herzegovian society. We propose that there is a relationship between intersection and gender inequality which might influence the trauma directly, especially in postwar situations. Thus, contemporary investigation of trauma, and its explanation and understanding should be based on psychology, philosophy, sociology. This approach, therefore, involves investigation and inscription of different trauma definitions and explanation in order to offer the most comprehensive one, forming a basis of adequate methodological apparatus for understanding the appropriation of

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war trauma in Bosnian and Herzegovian context not leaving the question of moral and collective responsibility of crime beside. The aim of this paper is to grasp, in accordance with the idea of transitional justice and post modernity, different position and approaches to trauma process, appropriation and stigma of those that have experienced or are blamed for the traumatic events of others.

From a psychological point of view, trauma relates to pain and suffering. While pain is a physiological phenomenon, trauma is a psychological one and causes severe psychological impairments and difficulties. Trauma causes psychological difficulties due to the fact that traumatic events are sudden, unexpected, uncontrollable, not ordinarily and chronic[1].

Traumatic events are extraordinary not because they occur rarely, but rather, they overwhelm common capacity of adaptation of human beings and threat to their life and bodily integrity signaling danger. Common human reaction to danger is very complex usually reflecting incorporated system of response encompassing both body and mind. Traumatic events produce profound and lasting physiological and psychological changes like physiological arousal, emotion, cognition and memory producing symptoms of hyper arousal, intrusion, and constriction which form the basis of post traumatic stress disorder.[2]

Also, traumatic events are not constrained to the period in which they occurred, but they can also be transmitted through generations. Bosnia-Herzegovina as a postwar society is characterized by transmission of traumatic events through generations. One of the aims of this article is to explore the ways through which these transmissions have been occurring through the last decade.

Sociology of gender and investigations of the trauma process

Gender sociology as an academic discipline exists since 1970-ties and it has its origins in the second wave of feminism.[3] The institutionalization of discipline was influenced by formation of different definitions of gender as social construction. Gender sociology is a sub discipline of sociology that questions sociological dimensions of gender, or gender as social praxis. Sociologist raised debates and critics on several questions regarding differences between genders, especially between roles that women and men perform. Performativity of gender is the position of contemporary egalitarian neoliberal perspective that forces the deconstruction of traditional gender roles based on patriarchal ideology. Division of labor on the gender bases is the main problem, and traditional sociological approaches such as the functionalism and precisely the system of Talcot Parsons and his followers such as Bowlby. The ancestor of the gender sociology was feminist sociology or sociology for women. This sociology was trained on faculties in United States of America and Western societies during early seventies of the 20th century. Amy Warthon, professor of Sociology at Washington State University in Vancouver, narrates in her recent work "*The Sociology of gender, an introduction to theory and research*", her experience in this discipline "I took my first course

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[1] Tedeschi R.G., Calhoun L. G., Trauma and transformation: Growing in the aftermath of suffering, Sage Publications, London, 1995.

[2] Herman, J. L. Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence from domestic abuse to political terror.*,* Basic Books, Harper and Collins publishers, New York, 1997, p.35.

[3] Kuper, Jessica and Kuper , Adam, *Enciklopedija društvenih nauka , tom 1 i 2,* Službeni glasnik, Beograd, 2009, pp. 1326-1329).

on gender as an undergraduate at the University of Oregon in 1975. As I recall, the course had only been in existence for a few years prior. Gender appeared nowhere as a title. It was called sociology of women".[4] The main question in this early stadium of formation the gender sociology as a discipline was a critic of male stream sociology.

Allthough, there are many influent women sociologists, they do not well known in literature and cited in academic journals because of double standards in recognition of academic work of women. Jessie Bernard strives for female enlightenment questioning the sociology as male stream discipline and therefore focused only to male experiences and he asks: "Can sociology become science of society rather than male society?"[5] Early eighties were marked by empirical works of sociologist in the field of gender in order to mark problems: "differences in job, payment, education, political participation, and domestic work, discriminated and violate women but they also included investigation of unrealistic demands of society in sports, job and interpersonal relation".

Dorothy Smith wrote her famous work Sociology for women as antecedents of later formed discipline of *Sociology of gender*. She was the only woman out of the 44 academic staff at the University. "Chilly climate for women" is the way in which Dorothy Smith explains her experience in teaching gender studies in early seventies. *Happy housewife myth* as a stereotype from the early fifties till now, was questioned by the results of several empirical studies that involve the quality of housewife's life versus life of working women and males. Women, who do not work, are more stressed and even subjected the health problems and depressions as well as young employed man. Emancipation of women does not cause the destruction of family that rather demands egalitarian relations in family and deconstruction of traditional approach to masculinity. Mary Jo Deegan in early 1990s, wrote the significant study *"Women Founders in Sociology"* in which she mentions 53 women as founders in Sociology. These women are rarely mentioned in the male stream sociology. Only pro-feminist masculine authors mentioned about works of women in Sociology. Piter Scot who conducted a study has written about 50 key sociologists but he only mentions three women.

Bosnian and Herzegovinian sociology is still male stream. Changes towards a more egalitarian perspective are needed. Sociology of gender as contemporary discipline involves investigation of masculinities and femininities as well as the sexuality. According to Kuper[6] future problems of this discipline, are globalization, transgender and intersexuality. Why is it important to study this discipline? Gender is something that we all participate in, its practice is our own experience, but this experience involves the interrelation with others and with institutions. Therefore, we should insist on the affirmation of multiplicity of identity, rather than leaning on traditional approaches of gender relation formed in Aristotelian perspective but ideologically forced in the work of Parsons and his followers.

Radical feminism with its notion of violence against women in public and private sphere, demands the identification of private and public sphere so that women involve in academic life and overcome the gender stereotypes regarding the roles of men and women.

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[4] Wharton, Amy, *Sociology of Gender*, Wiley and Blackwell, Singapore , pp. 5.
[5] Ibidem.
[6] Kuper, Jessica and Kuper , Adam, *Enciklopedija društvenih nauka* , tom 1 i 2, Službeni glasnik, Beograd, 2009, pp. 1329.

Therefore, as Ritzer states "Sociology of gender represents investigation of socially formed identities of male and female roles, relations and identities- being somewhat different in subject than feministic focus on women" [7]. Sociology of gender analyzes gender in relation to social structures and relations. Therefore sociology of gender is interdisciplinary, intra-disciplinary, pleuro-perspective and trans-disciplinary (trans-national). Sociology of gender is an interdisciplinary field of sociology; it demands the transmission of different knowledge and perspectives. In questioning the differences between female/male, sociology of gender needs the knowledge of biology, physiology, genetics, medicine, psychology and etc. In this context it is important how female and male bodies differ. This distinguishes characteristics that include chromosomal differences, external and internal sexual structures, hormonal production, and other physiological differences and secondary sex characteristics.[8]

Wharton explains sexual dimorphism, sex assignment and intersexuality as three different and significant terms in this discipline. Feminist theology analyzes the feminist approaches within the Holy Scriptures. Eco feminism as feminist branch analyzes the origin of societies that were based on female principle, questioning the binary opposites of male/female. Gender and development describes the experiences of Third World women, feminization of poverty, unemployment of women, and *violence over the women*. Female art opens the question of women marginalization in this discipline. Gender and law reinvasion legal documents are needed for affirmation of women regarding the rights of first and second generation. "Public is private, private is public", statement of Carol Pateman actually reopens the question of exclusion of women out of public sphere.

Picture 1: Intra-disciplinarity of Sociology of gender

Source: Created by L. Music, based on works of Wharton, Ritzer, Kuper and Kuper, and other contemporary sociological authors/ess.

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[7] Ritzer, George, *Suvremena sociologijska teorija*, Globus, Zagreb 1997.
[8] Wharton, Amy, *Sociology of Gender*, Wiley and Blackwell, Singapore, p. 10.

Sociology of gender is an intra-disciplinary field of knowledge. It uses the cognition of other sociological disciplines in order to transmit different types of gender practices *in vivo*. Therefore the structures of politics, religion, childhood (early socialization), violence, emotion, genocide, sexuality, work, ecology and family are analyzed in intersection within the gender. The origin of sociology of gender could be found in Marxism, whereas second wave feminism and radical feminism in sociology for women. The trauma analyses from the sociological point of view can be found in analyses of sociology of emotion, sociology of sexuality, sociology of violence, sociology of sexuality. This paper involves the intersection of the psychology of trauma, sociology of politics, sociology of genocide and sociology of violence. Jenny Adkins as a famous authoress analyses of war trauma and genocidal aspects of traumatic process.

Psychology of trauma

Although commonly used in relations to highly stressful events in our lives, the term psychological trauma recounts extreme stress which overwhelms our ability to cope. Highly stressful events negatively affect individuals by their effects on thoughts, emotions, negative changes in behavior, physical problems and complaints, significant psychological and physical distress.[9] Implication of psychological trauma lies in human vulnerability on one side and human capacity to do evil to fellow humans on the other. While traumatic events which take form in natural disasters, floods, hurricanes, volcanoes, technical failures, plane crashes, are considered as "acts of God". Thus, their psychological impacts tend to lessen due to human tendency to offer social and other sorts of support after them.[10] However, human caused traumas are the opposite. Not only trauma survivor's recovery process differs depending on the type of trauma but also effects of human designed traumatic events or traumas caused by human beings in a form of criminal violence, wars, physical and sexual abuse, rape, political violence, human rights abuse, domestic violence tend to cause severe psychological and social injuries and demand reaction from bystanders.

These two types of traumatic events inevitably lead to bystanders or witnesses' taking the side either of the victim/survivor or perpetrator. In the first case, when traumatic events are considered as acts of God or nature, people easily and readily take the side of survivors offering help and support which in turn leads into a quick recovery. In the second case however, witnesses are caught between the victims/survivors and perpetrators. This trauma dialectics are significant and, more often take psychological and social toll, individually and collectively. On the one hand, witnesses of traumas done to the others take perpetrators side even when they do nothing because perpetrators, with all might appeal to the universal desire to see, hear and speak no evil. On the other hand, all survivors or victims of trauma demand action, engagement and remembering. Therefore, they are asking others for active participation and sharing their burden of pain (what can lessen further transmission of trauma?). Individual survivors' responses to traumatic events are different. These responses to

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[9] Tedeschi R.G., Calhoun L. G., Trauma and transformation, Growing in the aftermath of suffering, Sage Publications, London, 1995

[10] Herman, J. L. Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence from domestic abuse to political terror.*,* Basic Books, Harper and Collins publishers, New York, 1997, p.7.

psychological trauma most often take form of biphasic reliving and denial with alternating intrusive and numbing responses or reactions.

The intrusive response reactions take form of hyper-reactivity, explosive aggressive outbursts, startle responses, intrusive recollections which take the form of nightmares and flashbacks as well as reenactment of situations reminiscent to trauma.[11] These responses reflect the first, initial phase of survivor's reactions to trauma. It is important to emphasize that trauma survivors in this phase are very vulnerable and have poor tolerance for psychological as well as physiological arousal. Thus, their usual response to such extreme stress consists of either motor discharge (like acts of aggression against the self and others) or reactions like numbing and withdrawal. Numbing reaction response consists of emotional constriction, social isolation, retreat from family obligations, anhedonia and a sense of estrangement. This reflects truly a complex mixture of biological, psychological, and social phenomena of trauma for number of reasons. Trauma is marked by the intense fear, helplessness, loss of control and threat of annihilation which represent common denominators of psychological trauma.[12] Human response or reaction to trauma can be described with five primary features: Persistence of startle response and irritability, inclination to explosive outbursts of aggression, fixation to the trauma, constriction of the general level of personality functioning and atypical dream life.[13]

Extreme fear leads to physiological arousal and vigilance, emotional anaesthesia and alexithymia, and extremes-bipolarity which take the form of a depression, as well as cognitive reactions like disorganized and confused thoughts.[14] Psychology of trauma lies in and signifies effects of traumatic events on individual which most often appear in a form of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder PTSD. Put it simple, PTSD refers to the enduring vigilance for and sensitivity to environmental threat. Severe trauma can have a major impact on the course of life caused by different responses. Also, according to the early trauma research such responses sometimes might take the form of ostensibly voluntary reenactment. For example, war veterans might want to be mercenaries, survivors or victims of sexual abuse may become prostitutes, abused children may expose themselves to constant danger.[15] Moreover, the phenomena of silencing and denial, repression and dissociation linger to play important role in trauma recovery on individual as well and societal level. In the absence of strong political movements for human rights, the active process of bearing witness inevitably gives way to the active process of forgetting.

Trauma in the thought of Jenny Edkins

Jenny Edkins analyses investigation and questioning process of the war trauma and the trauma itself as a process. In her work, *Trauma and Memories of the Politics,* authoress states that the people who lived through the war catastrophe, devastations and become refugees have traumas in form of the *flashbacks and nightmares*. Edkins emphasizes that the first

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[11] Bessel van der Kolk, Psychological trauma, American psychiatric Press Inc., Washington, 1987, p. 5

[12] Kaplan H.I., Sadock B. J., Comprehensive Textbook of psychiatry, 4th ed., Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore, 918-24. 1985.

[13] Bessel van der Kolk, Psychological trauma, American psychiatric Press Inc., Washington, (1987), p. 7.

[14] Ibidem, p. 5

[15] Ibidem.

investigations of war trauma concerned the Holocaust victims. Feminist in the 1970s had shown the similarity in the symptoms of the persons that experienced the war and the persons that were the victims of rape. The authoress emphasizes that the term posttraumatic stress was finally added into American Psychiatric Associations' Manual in 1980.[16] Authoress mentions Freud's work *On origin of hysteria,* out of which the definition of the hysteria, as one that is „formed as the result of the early molestation".[17] According to her one of the Freud's statements, was that women are guilty for the violence that happen to them, which represents and shows the position of women in that time. The people that have gone through the war trauma have experienced their own wishes projection, which is analog to the previous statement of Freud.[18] Therefore the question is how is trauma to be defined after this statement? What is trauma and how is it defined? How do we understand the trauma in the light of the experienced war, and how does trauma influence one's own experience of the life after the trauma? Edkins emphasizes that trauma happens as one sort of the betrayal of those that we have expected help from states: „What we call trauma takes place when the very powers that we are convinced will protect us, give us security, become our tormentors: when the community of which we consider ourselves, members turn against us or when our family is no longer a source of refuge but a site of danger".[19] Edkins explains that only the experience becomes fearful because of the fact that we consider to be friendly is the one that becomes the true enemy.

        Also, she underlines that all of us are the individuals. But, we belong to the certain social context and the reality that involves our dearest and our closest; family, friends, etc.: «If that order betrays using some way, we may survive in the sense of continuing to live as physical beings, but the meaning of our existence is changed». [20] The betrayal of those that are the closest to us represents the starting point for development and formation of trauma, and every emotion of safety is lost, and traumatic experiences form the relation between «personhood and community and the relations of power». [21] It is important to stress that traumatic experiences put the human relation into the question and destroys family relation, love, and union that existed before. Traumatic experiences or, the experience of trauma „destroy the fence of the self that is formed and that is contained in relations towards the other people. Undermining the belief systems that give the meaning to the human experience, they broke victims life in natural or God order and throw them into the state of the existential crisis". [22] Lewis Herman emphasizes that in the situation of a life threat and deathly sin people are used to call their own origin of protection and Edkins holds that wounded raped women victim**s** call their mothers for help or God. If they are left without response the feeling of the mutual trust is completely lost: . «Traumatized people are feeling completely left out, totally

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[16] Edkins, Jenny. *Trauma and Memory of the Politics*., CUP, Cambridge, 2003, p. 3
[17] Ibidem
[18] Ibidem
[19] Ibidem, p. 4.
[20] Ibidem, p. 4.
[21] Ibidem
[22] Lewis Herman, Judith. *Trauma i oporavak*. Druga, Zagreb, 1996, p. 67.

alone, ostracized out of the human and theological systems of care and protection that conserves life.».[23]

People, who experience the war trauma, are dominated by the feeling of the alienation that becomes the characteristic of every form of relation such as family relations, influencing the community relations and relations in congregations/religious communities, as well.[24] Edkins thinks that the experience of the trauma is similarly traumatic as the experience of the reconciliation process. Therefore, the person who witnesses the violence or listens about violence that has happened to somebody else is similarly subjected to traumatic process. On the other side, those that had committed violence might get the feeling of embarrassment and humiliation as the case of the Vietnam veterans when they face with the consequences later on.[25] Persons that had thrown the bombs and caused many homicides, often end up with committing suicide, because they could not have faced with the consequences of their act. Authoress speaks about the hardship of Vietnam veteran's position and emphasizes that they are tortured, they had watched tortures, and even committed crimes over the civil inhabitants.[26] Agamben argues in his work *Homo sacer*, in chapter *Sovereign power and bare life* as follows: «The bare life, in which the victims are transformed, is not the trans-political natural fact that must be stated and recognized by Law system, it is first of all the *threshold* in descriptive sense, the threshold in which each right becomes fact, and fact into the right in which both of the levels become ».[27] Traumatic occurrences, according to the authoress mentioned before, had shown that societal constitution is subjected to the contingents, and traumatic events question the essence of our existence and possibility for us to be defined by this or that occurrence.

 Edkins thinks that it is important to mention the social status for those that have experienced the war catastrophes. She express her thoughts as follows: «These may involve governments who have sent soldiers into battle, men who benefit from the structure in which women and children are subservient and vulnerable, states who have turned on a section of their own citizens in genocide or deportations».[28] The same authoress mentions that states are constituted on the violence that gets the form of «war, revolution or civil conflict».[29] Edkins thinks that Weber's definition of state leads us to understand the trauma: «The state is that human community which (successfully) lays claim to the monopoly of legitimate physical violence within a certain territory». Furthermore she shortens up this definition and supports the thesis that the use of violence represents the prerogative of the state. In particular, she even introduces the parallel formed by the feminists in 1970-ties and 1980-ties between the women and war veterans. This is especially important for further investigations of this paper, because it analyses the position of the women who were subjected to the different forms of violence.

It is important to state that the women position in war and their sacrifices difficult than that of men as soldier. The fact is that violence used over the women and children in a family,

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[23] Ibidem, p. 68.

[24] Ibidem

[25] Edkins, Jenny. *Trauma and Memory of the Politics*. Cambridge: CUP, 2003, p. 5.

[26] Ibidem, p.5.

[27] Agamben, Giorgio, *Homo Sacer* : *Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford University Press,1998, p.150.

[28] Edkins, Jenny, *Trauma and Memory of the Politics*. Cambridge, CUP, 2003, p.5.

[29] Ibidem, p. 6.

is the same as the violence over the males in a war. What occurs if we compare the way in which the men in war are treated in the same ways in which the women are treated in family? Edkins answers this questions as follows: „exploitations of the power in political communities, that we may call the political molestations "In this context, we can draw parallels between the political and traumatic events. The definition that is given by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Phillipe Bourgois, when they speak on political dimension of the trauma and war rape is: «Politically motivated torture is amplified by the symbolic violence that trails in its wake, making those who were tortured feel shame for their «weakness» in betraying their comrades. Rape survivors - especially those who were violated with genocidal or sadistic political intention during wars often become *living-dead people*, *refusing to speak of the unspeakable*».[30]The perplexity of the trauma is represented in the fact that it is experienced as something that we cannot speak about. In text of the above mentioned authoress, the intersection of the political one regarding the trauma of the political authorities, as in the example of the Vietnam Veterans, might cause the feeling of humiliation or anger. *Trauma and memory of the politics* describes the Vietnam veterans statements, it as follows: «We were angry as all civilized men who have ever been sent to make murder in the name of virtue were angry».[31] This leads to the following conclusions: «States abuse citizens on the battlefield, in captivity, in concentration camps. The modern state cannot be assumed to be place of safety, any more than the patriarchal family can. Political abuse somehow parallels sexual abuse».[32] The important relation for Edkins is the relation between the political and sexual torture, both of which lead to formation of the trauma. Authoress relates political and sexual tortures with language as a factor of the communication between the people, thinking that when they happen there is no way for them to be modeled linguistically and easily transmitted towards the other person. So, they conclude as follows: «Abuse by the state, the fatherland, like the abuse of the father within the family, cannot be spoken in language, since language comes from and belongs to the family and the community».[33] Communication happens in the language that is the part of the society that is in the relation with the power, and that is the reason why the traumas are hard to transmit or translate into the words. Edkins underlines that we are defined through the emotion of the belonging to the certain family and community. We are the individuals who are at the same time parts of the society. According to Edkins „language is part of the social order and that when the order is deconstructed even language is deconstructed".[34]

Husanović argues that „scar and face in ethical-political sense of question are past-communion traumatic knot".[35] Edkins consider this fact the hardest for the rehabilitation, therefore the only way to leave trauma is possibility of „verbalization and narration of *what* had happened".[36] Those that are survivors of the war trauma must transmit their knowledge

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[30] Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, Bourgeois Philippe. *Violence in War and Peace*. Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p.1.
[31] Edkins, Jenny,, *Trauma and Memory of the Politics*. Cambridge: CUP, 2003, p. 7.
[32] Ibidem.
[33] Ibidem.
[34] Ibidem, p. 8.
[35] Husanović, Jasmina, *Etičko-politička zaviješćanja lica i ožiljaka: Bosanske priče i traume kao imenice ženskog roda u množini,* Treća, broj 1, Vol.IX, 2007, p. 59.
[36] Edkins, Jenny, *Trauma and Memory of the Politics*. Cambridge: CUP, 2003, p. 9.

into their experiences into the language and afterwards become part of the community again. They become the part of the community when they form the relations based on trust, again.[37] Charlotte Lindsay explains the hardships of sexual violence in comparison to other forms of violence: „The social stigma, cultural and religious attitudes, emotional traumas, physical abuses, reproductive manipulations, and historical impunities have made sexual assault an extremely effective weapon of war and destruction".[38]

Trans generational Transmission of Chosen Trauma: Case of Bosnia-Herzegovina

Historians Hirst and Manier define collective memories as shared individual memories that bear on collective identity.[39] However, two individuals in isolation and as a part of a community will often remember the past inaccurately and will maintain this false belief even when the facts are told to them. Therefore, the past is always reframed to conform to someone's attitudes and beliefs. Also, past experiences are something that usually shapes our identity.

Large-group (ethnic, national, religious) identity is defined as the subjective experience of thousands or millions of people who are linked by a persistent sense of sameness while also sharing numerous characteristics with others in foreign groups.[40] The main task is that members of a large group share to maintain, protect, and repair their group identity, while a "chosen trauma" is one component of this identity. The term "chosen trauma" refers to the shared mental representation of a massive trauma that the group's ancestors suffered at the hand of an enemy.[41] This means, when a large group regresses, its chosen trauma is reactivated in order to support the group's threatened identity, therefore reactivation may have dramatic and destructive consequences. As Vamik Volkan states, in peaceful times people turn their attention toward their individualized garments and their interactions with their families, relatives, clans, neighbors, schools, professional and social organizations, sports clubs, local and national political parties and their facebook pages, but when a large group is humiliated or threatened by "others" who identify with another large group, the attacked population to a great extent abandons its routine preoccupations and becomes obsessed with repairing and protecting.[42] When a large group is under stress and its identity is threatened or when a large-group kills in the name of identity, the people who belong to such groups quickly and definitively separate their large-group identity from the identity of the "other," the "enemy" of large group. Chosen glories are shared mental images of pride and pleasure evoking past events and heroes that are recollected ritualistically.[43] Therefore, past victories in battle and great accomplishments of a political or religious nature frequently appear as chosen glories.

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[37] Ibidem.

[38] Lindsey, Charlotte, *Women facing war*, ICRC, Geneva , 2001, p.51.

[39] Hirst, M., Manier, D., Toward a Psychology of Collective Memory, 2008.

[40] Volkan, V.D., Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity, 2001

[41] Ibid.

[42] Volkan, V.D., Bosnia-Herzegovina: Chosen Trauma and its Transgenerational Transmission, 2002.

[43] Ibid.

These chosen glories can increase collective self-esteem, but they do not burden the next generation(s) with complicated shared psychological tasks as chosen traumas do. [44]

However, when a trauma results from oppression, war or other ethnic, national, religious or political conflict, especially when the victimized large group is rendered passive and helpless, there is an identifiable enemy large group that has *deliberately* inflicted pain, humiliation, environmental restriction, destruction and death on its victims.[45] That type of collective trauma can take place in post-war societies such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, because the affected large group and the perpetrators belong to different large groups and the killing and the destruction is in the name of large-group identity. According to Volkan, only this kind of trauma may evolve as a chosen trauma, since a large group does not "choose" to be victimized by another large group and subsequently lose self-esteem, but it does "choose" to dwell on a past traumatic event and make it a major design to be stitched on the canvas of a large-group tent.[46]

There are many forms of trans-generational transmission, and some of them can be seen even in small children (anxiety, depression, elation, worries and fantasies). An adult may "deposit" his or her own injured self-images within the child along with images of others who were involved in the traumatic event—even sometime the image of the perpetrator—and then give psychological tasks to these transferred images that aim to ease the pain and terror of the original trauma or control the outcome of the trauma.[47] In other words, the adult person uses the child (mostly unconsciously) as a permanent reservoir for certain self- and other images belonging to that adult and creates experiences for the child.

In that kind of situation, a powerful unseen network among hundreds, thousands, or millions of people can be created and traumatized memories, states or even speeches can be transmitted from one to another. That is the situation in contemporary Bosnia-Herzegovina where different types of truth exist, clashing with each other and denying each other. Depending on external conditions, shared tasks may change from generation to generation, while reactivated chosen trauma and entitlement ideology strengthen the people's sense of belonging to the same group, their shared large-group identity and their reactivation may become a crucial resistance to find a peaceful solution to the group's problems involving its current enemies.[48]

The following schema can provide guidelines for a formulation of chosen trauma.

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[44] Volkan, V.D., Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity, 2001.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Volkan, V.D., Bosnia-Herzegovina: Chosen Trauma and its Transgenerational Transmission, 2002.
[48] Ibid.

Schema 1: Formulation of chosen trauma

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 Revictimization
⇓
Increased Prejudice and Magnification of Current Large-Group Conflict
⇓
"Irrational" Decision Making
⇓
Tendency for Purification and Mobilization of Destructive Large-Group Activities

Source: Volkan, V.D., Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity, 2001, p. 93.

However, a chosen trauma refers to ancestors' victimhood, but the current group does not wish to give up its investment in it, since to do so would mean giving up a significant aspect of the shared large-group identity, so the large group resists making peace with its contemporary enemy.[49] While political and legal systems have no power to deal with it, transmission of different chosen traumas and different memories is still at place in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina. More than peace building intervention is needed here, and that includes understanding, meeting with the other together with all his chosen traumas and chosen glories and becoming aware of all differences that exist around us.

Individual trauma versus collective trauma

Transitional justice and question of collective responsibility for crimes committed, in postmodern and post transitional perspective involves relation of individual and collective consciousness and responsibility for crime as well as the dialogue in between the sides that were in war. Nenad Dimitrijevic from Central European University question the mass crime, denial, and collective responsibility in his recent work *Duty to Respond* as follows: "I wish to make certain distance at the very beginning: the inspiration for me to write this book was not academic. I belong to the social group in whose name recently the heavy crimes had been

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[49] Ibid.

committed. I am chased by the spirits of innocent people that were killed in my name. That is probably the typical reaction to mass crime, that had been experienced in past from people that belonged to the group identity of those that have committed the mass crimes."[50]

Collective responsibilities can be handled in two ways. Firstly, "those persons must address the victims and admit the moral and factual importance of the crime. That means that the suffering of the victims and injustice of this act must be recognized. The second obligation involves the obligation for the committer group to think over themselves … as a members of a group that had recently in the cruelest way of all broken universal moral principles , we all do have the obligation to react on the crime".[51]

Conclusion

The definition of trauma by Jenny Edkins, in her work in great sense explains the behavior of victims stated in the true authentic statements of the witnesses to the war rape as follows: „What we call trauma takes place when the very powers that we are convinced will protect us give us security become our tormentors. when the community of which we consider ourselves members turns against us or when our family is no longer a source of refuge but a site of danger".[52]

The trauma itself represents sudden, unexpected change in life that we expect the protection, betray or abandon us. Traumatic events put human relations under the question mark and destroy family bonds. Traumatic events break the barriers of self that is formed and constituted in relation to the other people. Edkins emphasizes that the only way of leaving the trauma behind is if we transmit traumatic process into the words, or if we find the way for unspeakable or impossible to express in words. Only if we speak about ourselves, about what had happened and if we try to integrate into the community in which we can feel safe after the experienced trauma, we can find the way towards recovering. Inhumanity committed against women of Bosnia-Herzegovina and war trauma that inhumanity brings with it, in the authentic narrations of the witnesses get totally new importance for themselves and community in which they try to continue their life after the traumatic experience. Also, it is important to be aware of the ways in which trauma can be transmitted through the generations so that scientists will conduct analysis and possible coordination of various narratives, which is of special importance for the process of reconciliation in post-conflict divided societies.

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[50] Dimitrijević, N., *Dužnost da se odgovori*, Fabrika knjiga, Beograd, 2011, p. 15-16.
[51] Ibid. p. 313.
[52] Edkins, Jenny. *Trauma and Memory of the Politics*. Cambridge, CUP, 2003, p. 4.

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