Group-Analytic Contexts

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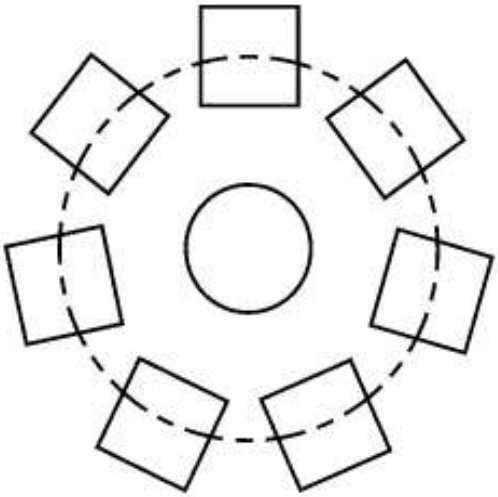

International Newsletter of

THE GROUP-ANALYTIC SOCIETY

Editor: Tom Ormay

GAS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2005

GROUP ANALYTIC SOCIETY, London

102 Belsize Lane
London NW3 5BB
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 435 6611
Fax: +44 (0) 207 443 9576
E-mail**:** admin@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk

Website: www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk

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Editorial

By the end of this year we got to the thirtieth issue of our newsletter. Since we reorganised it, from the beginning of last year, it has been coming out quarterly, at the same time as Group Analysis, the journal. The changing of Contexts ha only been a sign of a series of changes our Society has been going through, and from much earlier that two years. Way back, in the nineties it seemed desirable to define some boundaries between Group Analytic Society and the Institute of Group Analysis. It has been known that GAS was the older and the Institute was organised to do the training, but somehow, for the last ten years the Society has fallen back, and some of the functions that originally belonged to GAS were gradually taken over by IGA. A further significant change occurred as group analytic movement became at leas European wide, if not international. The first step was when GAS went to find new offices nearby and the finances of the two organisations were separated. This was completed under Werner's presidency. During the next term, in Luisa's time, we had to face up to the fact that we became "international". By now there is a number of GASes in Europe, and next target is the United States. What was going to happen to GAS London? Would it stay a fundamentally British organisation with a large number of non-British members, or do we need a British society, and an international umbrella one to hold all the national GASes together? We have not yet solved the problem, but at last we got to the point where relevant people actually recognise that there is an issue there. And you know how difficult that can be!

We just began the present terms with Gerda, inheriting all that has been left unsolved. One problem that newly emerged, and we are facing at present is about the relationship between the Group Analytic Society and the Editorial Committee of Group Analysis the journal. The question was brought to the head when Malcolm Pines, who has been the editor for over twelve years, has announced his pending retirement in Molde in the Summer. He has done a wonderful job, and whoever takes over, will not find it easy to match him. I am sure he will be available for advise. Our job seems to be to make it clear at last to what extent and in what sense the Editorial Committee is really a subcommittee of the Management Committee of GAS. I am sure some people will not like the expression "sub-committee", then we shall have to find another word. The fact is that the journal is the property of GAS. On the other hand, editing a journal requires freedom and independence, at least in a liberal democracy it does. For example, should the new editor be found by the Management Committee or by the Editorial Committee? Presumably, they need to work together, but then, who should do what? That is where we are at the moment.

Our president: Gerda discusses some of these points in her Presidential page. Her voice is clear and calm, as ever. Next we have the opening lecture: Large group identity, Large-Group Regression and Massive Violence, by V. D. Volcan. We heard it The 13th European Symposium in Group Analysis 'Between Matrix and Manuals' Sponsored by the Group Analytic Society (London) and the Institute of Group Analysis (Norway), in Molde, August 2005. Vamik's perennial topic is the use of psychoanalytic theories for understanding world events. He demonstrates that it is possible to give quite a good analysis of recent history and the present state of the world, by the use of such theories. It is followed by Earl Hopper's response to the lecture. In it Earl points out the need for development in Psychoanalytic thinking and offers his fourth basic assumptions: incohesion. It is good to feel that our way of

thinking enables us to be “with it”, not only in the consulting rooms, but also in the world “out there”.
We are very lucky that Lauren E. Storck, who is a member of our Management Committee, had the idea of getting donations for our work. She published an invitation.
Trevor Mumby, another member of our Committee, has managed to organize a GAS Forum on the Internet. Reading his information, we can find out how we may join, and participate.
In Memoriam we learn that one of our associate members: Ian Boardman, has dies.
Contexts 30 tuned out to be quite a substantial issue. I hope you benefit from reading it, and please send us what you have to say, may it be a paper or just a few words. This is your newsletter, please use it.

Tom Ormay
Editor

President's Page

Almost half a year has passed since the Molde Symposium, where many of us met. What I take back from that experience is the richness of the lectures, papers and workshops, the experience of the Large Group, the meeting with people, the excellent organisation and last but not least the spontaneous singing of all the different nationalities at the dinner party, which was very moving.

In the New-Year we can look forward to two other events where we will have the opportunity to meet and share concepts and ideas. The first one will be the 34th Winter Workshop, which this year takes place in Lisbon, Portugal, 12-15 January, 2006 as a joint venture between the Lisbon Group Analytic Society and Group Analytic Society (London) and under the chairmanship of Isaura Neto. The title "Group Analysis Today: Concepts and Preconceptions" certainly will give occasion for reflection and discussion.

May 19th 2006 another of the Group Analytic Society´s main events takes place: The Foulkes Lecture followed by the Study Day. Vic Schermer from USA is to address spirituality in his lecture.
This theme was already touched upon in the Large Group in Molde and it shall be very interesting to hear what Vic Schermer has to say about it.

The Management Committee has been working hard this Autumn but in a very good spirit, starting from the first meeting in Molde and the second one in October and in between by e-mail. We have undertaken quite a few projects, one of them is mentioned in this issue: the new GAS website and discussion Forum. Another subject that has had our attention is the membership fee. We recognize that people from Eastern European Countries have a lower income and we have agreed to propose a lower membership fee for those countries subject to approval by the next AGM. We are starting up contact to the local organising committee of our next Symposium in Slovenia, 2008. Other things we have been working on are in an early phase and I shall come back and tell more about them in the next issue of Contexts.

Finally I hope to see as many of you as possible at the Winter Workshop and in the Foulkes Weekend, it is in these events we have the possibility to share with other group analysts and to be enriched by people and ideas.

Gerda Winther

34th WINTER WORKSHOP OF THE GROUP-ANALYTIC SOCIETY (LONDON)

Group Analysis Today
Concepts and Preconceptions

We believe that one of the possible reasons of the "analytic crisis" – Psychoanalysis and Groupanalysis – may be the more or less denied incoherencies, contradictions, paradoxes, rigidities within our own Societies, in our Theory and Practice. These could also be a good reason for the decreasing interest in Psychoanalysis and Groupanalysis held by young students. Therefore, we believe that it is time to clarify core concepts and reflect about prejudices in order to rebuild trust and go beyond the crisis.

To be held in Lisbon from 12 – 15 January 2006

Mainspeakers:
Earl Hopper, Isaura Manso Neto, Dieter Nitzgen (to be confirmed).
Chairperson:
Isaura Manso Neto.

Venue: National Association of Pharmacies, Rua Marechal Saldanha, nº. 1 1249-069, Lisbon.

Fees: Before November 30th: (300 €) – GAS & SPG members (250 €) – Students (120 €)

After November 30th: (350 €) – GAS & SPG members (300 €) – Students (150 €)

Registration: Sociedade Portuguesa de Grupanálise (Portuguese Groupanalytic Society), Lisbon

Programme: Conferences, Round Tables, Large Groups, Small Groups and Social Dreaming Groups.

Information: Sociedade Portuguesa de Grupanálise (Lisbon),
Rua Carlos José Barreiros, nº. 25, r/c Dto., 1000-807, Lisboa.
Tel. +351 960 229 778 FAX: +351 218 460 622
email: winterworkshop@sapo.pt
Website: www.grupanalise.pt

Group-Analytic Society (London), 102, Belsize Lane,
LONDON NW3 5BB, UK.
Tel. 44 (0) 207 435 6611. FAX 44 (0) 207 443 9576.
email: admin@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk
website: www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk

,Large-Group Identity,

Large-Group Regression and Massive Violence

Vamık D. Volkan

The 13th European Symposium in Group Analysis 'Between Matrix and Manuals'

Sponsored by the Group Analytic Society (London) and the Institute of Group Analysis (Norway), Molde, August 2005

Ladies and Gentlemen

In 1932 Albert Einstein wrote a letter to Sigmund Freud asking if the new science of psychoanalysis could offer insights that might deliver mankind from the menace of war. In his response to Einstein, Freud expressed little hope for an end to war and violence, or the role of psychoanalysis in changing human behavior beyond the individual level (Freud, 1932). However, even Jacob Arlow (1973) found some cautious optimism in some of Freud's writings, Freud's general pessimism was mirrored by many of his followers, and this fact, I think, has played a key role in limiting the contributions psychoanalysis has made to international relations in general and finding more peaceful solutions for conflicts between enemy groups in particular.

Since Freud, many authors, including those writing about world affairs, politics and diplomacy, *who are not themselves practicing psychoanalysts* have referred to psychoanalysis in their attempt to understand world affairs and large-group

psychology in general. They often referred to Freud's writings such as *Totem and Taboo* (1913), *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921), *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930), and Freud's correspondence with Einstein mentioned above. The main problem with their approach, as Hendrick (1958) noticed long ago, is that because of it, "psychoanalysis is misused by intellectuals, who argue its validity as if it were a philosophy, an ethical system, a set of theories; such discussion…seems alien and unproductive to the analyst himself, whose primary convictions originate in what his patients have told him" (p.4) Their approach usually overlooked two important considerations. First, psychoanalytic theories that systematize new findings in the field have been expanded enormously in the decades since Freud's first pioneering work. To be sure, some authors who are not practicing psychoanalysts now refer to new psychoanalytic theoreticians, such as Jaques Lacan, while writing about large-group psychology. In general, however, these authors also utilize the new psychoanalytic theories as if they were a set of philosophical considerations.

Second, observations afforded by clinical psychoanalytic practice have more to offer the study of world affairs, ethnic identity, political leader-followers interactions and the eruption of massive violence. Working with children in psychoanalytic therapy, analyzing borderline or narcissistic adults, and conducting clinical small group analysis, in believe, informs us more about world affairs than studying metapsychology or psychoanalytic theories of mind.

Meanwhile, practicing psychoanalysts, with a few exceptions, have basically tended to treat patients, without much interest in or attention to political or diplomatic issues. When they wrote about such issues, they usually applied theories of individual psychology to large-group processes without taking into consideration that

once they start, the large-group processes take on their own specific directions and appear

as new political, social or ideological movements (Volkan,2005). Recently, especially

since September 11, 2001, practicing psychoanalysts have shown more interest in large-

group psychology.

Let me first tell you what I mean by the term *large group*. In the psychoanalytic literature the term "large group" often refers to 30 to 150 members who meet in order to deal with a given issue. When the task given to such a "large group" is unstructured and vague by design, the "large group" regresses. At this time, observers notice increased anxiety, chaos, and panic among its members (Rice, 1965; Turquet, 1975; Kernberg, 1998, 2003a, 2003b). In order to escape its panicky atmosphere, regressed "large groups" exhibit narcissistic or paranoid characteristics and reorganize themselves by sharing and utilizing primitive mental mechanisms.

Otto Kernberg (2003a, 2003b) uses the term "large group" when he refers to groups composed of 30 to 150 individuals. He uses the term "crowds" when he refers to spectators at a big sports event or large theatrical performance. He also mentions disorganization in crowds after natural disasters and then speaks of "mass movements" and "societal and cultural processes." He primarily illustrates the emergence of aggression in "small groups," "crowds" and "societies" when regression and disorganization sets in.

In this presentation my focus is on *ethnic, national, or religious large groups*. I use the term "large group" *only* to refer to tens, hundreds of thousands, or millions of individuals, most of whom will never meet during their lifetimes. Paraphrasing Erik Erikson's (1950) statement about personal identity, I use the term *large-group identity* to refer to a large group that shares a permanent sense of sameness while also

sharing certain similar characteristics with other large groups, especially with those who are neighbors.

Ethnic, national, or religious large groups' psychodynamics in many areas *are different* from the psychodynamics of "small groups," "large groups" (composed of 30 or 150 individuals), or "crowds." For example, a "crowd" in a football stadium becomes a group and remains so just before, during, and perhaps soon after the sports event. On the other hand, let us consider an ethnic, national or religious large groups, like the Mauri, Serbian or Catholic large groups. The membership in such large groups *begins in childhood*. Elsewhere I illustrated (Volkan1988, 1997, 2004 a) how each member's core *personal identity* is intertwined with their large-group identity.

This presentation studies some aspects of *large-group psychology in its own right*. I started to study ethnic,national or religious large group psychology without a formal training in clinical group analysis. My only experience with small groups took place in the late 1960s and the early 1970s when I conducted twice a week teaching activities with small groups of psychiatric residents during each academic year (Volkan1972; Volkan and Hawkins, 1971a, 1971b). In 1977, then Egyptian president Anwar el-Sadat stunned the political world by visiting Israel. When he addressed the Israeli Knesset he spoke about a psychological wall between Arabs and Israelis and stated that psychological barriers constitute 70 percent of the entire problem that existed between the Arabs and the Israelis. With the blessings of the Egyptian, Israeli and American governments, the American Psychiatric Association's (APA's) Committee on Psychiatry and Foreign Affairs followed up on Sadat's statements by bringing together influential Israelis, Egyptians and later Palestinians for a series of unofficial negotiations that took place between 1979 and 1986. I was a member of this committee. I noticed that whenever they met the Israeli and Arab delegates became

spokespersons of their large-group sentiments. This is how I began my study of large-group psychology, enemy relationships, and interactions between political leader and their followers, and how I began to consider offering strategies to tame aggression between enemy groups (Volkan, 1988, 1997, 1999, 2004 a and b).

Until the work of the APA's committee, again starting with Freud, psychoanalytic theories concerning large groups mainly focused on individuals' perceptions of what their large groups psychologically mean to them. The six-year study of the Arab-Israeli conflict through a psychological lens provided an opportunity for me to begin to examine the psychology of large groups in its own right. Later I observed other "enemy" representatives—such as Russians and Estonians, Georgians and South Ossetians, Serbs and Croats or Turks and Greeks—in years-long unofficial negotiation series. I also interviewed traumatized people in some refugee camps where "we-ness" becomes palpable. Furthermore, I spent time with political leaders such as the former US president Jimmy Carter (throughout the 1990s I was a member of the Carter Center's International Negotiation Network {INN}), the former Northern Cyprus president Rauf Denktaş, former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Haiti president Jean-Bertrand Aristite, the late Yasser Arafat, the present Estonian president Arnold Rüütel and, the present Nigerian president Olesegun Obasanjo and observed aspects of leader-followers psychology in these leaders' verbalized thought processes and actions. Then I was able to define the concept of "large-group identity," a sense of sameness shared by thousands or millions of people, which explains what they mean when they say, "We are Norwegians," "We are Arabs," or "We are Jews,"

Because of their clinical interests, group analysts have focused more on small groups and the psychodynamics involved when seven to fifteen individuals gather for

a series of meetings. Wilfred Bion's (1961) work is among the best known of such studies. A "small group" with a definite leader, a structured task, and an awareness of time evolves as a "work group" and performs its task with an adaptation to reality. When such a group's security is threatened or when it is not given a realistic and structured task, Bion describes how it begins to function according to three "basic assumptions," which I am sure very familiar to you. I am also sure that you are familiar with my discussant Earl Hopper's (2003) theory of the fourth basic assumption. Unlike myself, Earl Hopper had pursued a systematic study in understanding groups and what he calls "group-like social systems." His intellectual quest shows the influence of psychoanalysis,

group analysis as well as sociology. In a sense I came from one direction and he came from another direction to the topic of this presentation. Today we are meeting and I hope that our discussion in front of you will be rich.

Now let me turn my attention to the classical Freudian theory of large groups. When I do this, I visualize people arranged around a gigantic maypole, which represents the group leader. Individuals in the large group dance around the pole/leader, identifying with each other and idealizing the leader. I have expanded this metaphor by imagining a *canvas* extending from the pole out over the people, forming a huge tent. This canvas represents the *large-group identity*. I have come to the conclusion that essential ethnic, national or religious large-group activities center around maintaining the integrity of the large-group identity, and leader-follower interactions are just one element of this effort.

Imagine thousands or millions of persons living under a huge tent. They may get together in subgroups. They may belong to certain clans or professional organizations and they may be poor or rich or women or men. But all of them are

under one huge canvas. The pole of the tent is the political leadership. *From an individual psychology point of view*, the pole may represent an idealized father (Freud, 1921) or nurturing mother (Chaseguet-Smirgel,1984, Kernberg, 1998). *From a large-group psychology point of view*, the pole's task is to keep the tent's canvas erect (to maintain and protect the large-group identity). Everyone under the tent's canvas wears his or her individual garment (personal identity), but everyone under the tent, including the political leader, also shares the tent canvas as a second garment. Elsewhere I identified *seven threads* that, when they are woven together, produce the cloth—the canvas of the large-group tent—ranging from shared identifications to "chosen traumas" (Volkan, 1997, 2004 a). Today I will not discuss these seven threads, but later in this presentation I will explain what I mean by a "chosen trauma."

In our routine lives we are not keenly aware of our shared second garment, just as we are not usually aware of our constant breathing. If we develop pneumonia or if we are in a burning building, we quickly notice each breath we take. Likewise, if our huge tent's canvas shakes or parts of it are torn apart, we become obsessed with our second garment. Our individual identity becomes secondary. We become preoccupied with the large-group identity and will do anything to stabilize it, repair it, maintain it and protect it. During these efforts we begin to tolerate extreme sadism or masochism if we think that what we are doing will help to maintain and protect our large-group identity. (Before going any further I must remind you that here I am speaking of general large-group processes and leaving out certain small groups such as dissenters.) Interestingly, the more our second garment is in danger of being damaged, the more we try to cling to it. We see this phenomenon very clearly while visiting refugee camps or other societies where large-group identity is threatened.

In 1987, after the Arab-Israeli dialogue series came to an end, I opened The Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction (CSMHI) under the umbrella of the University of Virginia's School of Medicine and directed it until 2002. This Center was the first of its kind in any medical school. Its faculty consisted of psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, and psychologists, but also former diplomats, political scientists, historians and scholars from other disciplines. CSMHI was lucky enough to sign a contract with the Soviet Duma. This gave us an opportunity to study the US–USSR interactions from a psychopolitical point of view until the collapse of the Soviet Empire. This study and our following practices in the field—such as bringing together Russians and Estonians for a series of meetings between 1994 to 2000 in order to help Estonia achieve a peaceful "divorce' from the Soviet Union (now Russian Federation)—allowed us to come up with further theories concerning large-group psychology in its own right and to examine the meaning of some large-group processes.

Large groups are made of individuals; therefore large-group processes reflect individual psychology. But a large group is not a living organism that has one brain, so once a large-group process starts, it establishes a life of its own within the society. The following is one example:

Psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, psychologists and other mental health professionals know a great deal about the individualized process of mourning. Mourning is an obligatory human psychobiological response to a meaningful loss. When a loved one dies, the mourner has to go through predictable and definable phases until his or her mourning process comes to a practical end (Volkan, 1981, Pollock, 1989). Many psychoanalysts going all the way back to Sigmund Freud himself (1917), contributed greatly to our understanding of the individual mourning

process during which the mourner internally reviews his or her experiences with the lost person (or thing) and lets this person (or thing) be psychologically "buried" slowly. If everything goes in a routine fashion, the mourner also identifies with aspects and functions the dead person or thing possessed when still living or when it was still around, and keeps the dead person or thing "alive" within his or her psyche. This process may take many years. The individual mourning processes can be "infected" due to various reasons, and we can predict what may happen after such "infections" (Volkan, 1981, Volkan and Zintl, 1993).

Large groups also mourn. Since a large group is not one living organism with one brain, its mourning over the loss of loved ones, lands, and prestige after a war or war-like situation will appear in large-group processes *on a societal level*. For example, after a major shared trauma and loss at the hand of enemies, a political ideology of *irredentism*—a shared sense of entitlement to recover what had been lost—may emerge that reflects a complication in large-group mourning and an attempt both to deny losses and to recover them. What Greeks call the "Megali Idea" (Great Idea) is such a political ideology. Such political ideologies may last for centuries and may disappear and reappear when historical circumstances change (Volkan and Itzkowitz, 1994).

The last time we witnessed the reappearance of a political ideology of entitlement was after the collapse of Yugoslavia (Sells, 2002). When the huge Yugoslav tent was gone the Serbs, the Croats, the Bosniaks and others became preoccupied with establishing themselves under their specific smaller tents. When a large group asks, "Who are we now?" they become preoccupied with repairing, protecting and maintaining the canvas of their tent. In order to hold on to their large-group identity, they try to illuminate specific symbols woven into or painted on the

fabric of their tent's canvas. When ethnic, nationalistic, or religious identity markers are illuminated, doing so reassures the society that their large-group identity still exists. I named one of these significant markers a *chosen trauma*.

A chosen trauma is the shared mental representation of an event in a large group's history in which the group suffered a catastrophic loss, humiliation, and helplessness at the hands of enemies. When members of a victim group are unable to mourn such losses and reverse their humiliation and helplessness, they pass on to their offspring the images of their injured selves and the psychological tasks that need to be completed. This process is known as *the transgenerational transmission of trauma*. (For a review and an examination of this concept see: Volkan, Ast and Greer, 2002.) All such images and tasks contain references to the same historical event. As decades pass, the mental representation of such an event links all the individuals in the large group. Thus such a mental representation of a historical event emerges as a significant large-group identity marker. A chosen trauma reflects the "infection" of a large-group's mourning process. A reactivation of a chosen trauma serves to link the members of a large group. Such reactivation can be used by the political leadership to promote new massive societal movements, some of them deadly and malignant.

Political leaders may initiate the reactivation of chosen traumas in order to fuel entitlement ideologies. The story of Slobodan Milošević allowing and supporting the re-appearance of *the Serbian chosen trauma*—the mental representation of the June 28, 1389 Battle of Kosovo—is well documented (Volkan, 1997). According to the myth that developed among the Serbs some 70 years after the Battle of Kosovo, the event and the Serbian characters of this battle, especially the Serbian leader Prince Lazar who was killed during the battle, mingled with elements and characters of Christianity. As decades passed, Prince Lazar became associated with Jesus Christ.

For example, icons showing Lazar's representation decorated many Serbian churches throughout the six centuries following the battle. Even during the communist period when the government discouraged hero worship, each day the Serbs were able to drink (introject) a bottle of red wine called "Prince Lazar."

As the six-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo approached in 1989, with the permission and encouragement of Milošević, Lazar's 600-year-old remains, which had been kept north of Belgrade, were placed in a coffin and taken over the course of the year to almost every Serb village and town, where they were received by huge crowds of mourners dressed in black. Again and again during this long journey, Lazar's remains were symbolically buried and reincarnated, until they were buried for good at the original battleground in Kosovo on June 28, 1989. On this day, the six-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, a helicopter brought Milošević to the burial ground where earlier a huge monument made of red stone symbolizing blood had been built (Kaplan, 1993). In the mythology, Prince Lazar had chosen the Kingdom of Heaven over the Kingdom of earth. By design, Milošević, descended from a helicopter, representing Prince Lazar coming to earth to find a new Kingdom, a Greater Serbia.

Thus Milošević and his associates, by activating the mental representations of Lazar and the Battle of Kosovo, along with the peak emotions they generated, were able to create a year-long "time collapse" (Volkan, 2004 a). The perceptions, feelings, and expectations concerning a past hero and event were collapsed into the perceptions, feelings, and expectations about at a current "enemy," magnifying its threat. Milošević and his associates first encouraged a shared sense of victimization followed by a shared sense of entitlement for revenge. This led to genocidal acts in Europe at the end of the 20th century. In early June 2005, new tapes showing violent

murders in the name of large-group identity shook the Serbian citizens—as well as rest of us.

Why do we need to pay attention to specific large group processes in their own right in international relations? To answer this question imagine a serial killer such as Jack the Ripper or Ted Bundy who is murdering his victims by strangling them with a red scarf. Also imagine that this serial killer is caught, tried and put away. What happens to his murder weapon, the red scarf? It stays in a dusty box in the basement of a court or police building as evidence used during the trial. In short, in the future no one else will use this scarf as a "tool" for murdering people.

Let us go back to Milošević. At the present time he is being tried because the United Nations considers him responsible for mass murder, among other things. What was Milošević 's "red scarf" and what will happen to it? As I described above, one of Milošević 's prominent "tools" for inciting extreme violence was his reactivation (with the help of some Serbian academicians and people from the Serbian Church) of shared symbols of the Serbian large-group identity: mental representations of the Battle of Kosovo and the Serbian leader Prince Lazar who was killed during this battle.

Now let us imagine that Milošević is found guilty and is put away, but his "red scarf" is not put away in a basement. Since this “red scarf” *belongs to the large group* and not to a lone individual, it is possible to use it again in a future large-group process. We know this because Milošević is not the first person to inflame the mental representations of the Battle of Kosovo and Prince Lazar. On June 28, 1914, for example, during an anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, a Serb named Gavrilo Prencip assassinated Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary and his pregnant wife in Sarajevo, thereby beginning World War I. We can imagine that

Gavrilo Prencip, above and beyond being under his own individual psychology, was wearing the canvas of his large-group identity as his main garment when he killed the Archduke and his wife. I think that the present day suicide bombers too become spokesperson of their large group identity Volkan, 2004a).

The political, legal and military systems have no effective methods to deal with a "tool" that can be used for massive destruction when it belongs to a large group rather than just the man or woman who makes use of it. It can be better understood by the application of psychological insights that illuminate large-group processes in their own right than by logical realpolitik conceptualizations. Who is going to examine "red scarves" that are the property of large groups? I hold that psychoanalysts, especially group analysts, are best equipped to do so if they are willing to venture beyond their couches or clinical small group therapy offices, conduct field work, and collaborate with scholars and practitioners from other disciplines (especially history), in an effort to understand collective human issues such as politics, diplomacy, wars, and terrorism.

Psychoanalysts have theorized about the aggressive drive as being the root cause of war; the state, the nation, and its leaders as mental representations of a mother, father, or ideal self; the identification of large-group members with one another; and so on. Many of these considerations, although they may be theoretically valid as far as individual psychology is considered and meaningful for clinicians, have had a very limited impact on political theory, and diplomats have found them inapplicable to their practical analysis of international events and relationships. The primary reason for this is that most psychoanalytic theories of large-groups focus on an individual's perception and experiences of his or her own large group and its

leader, and do not deal in depth with *specific issues* in international affairs such as the reactivation of a specific chosen trauma.

When a large-group identity is threatened by various things, such as the group's enemies, the ethnic, national, or religious large group regresses. I found 20 signs and symptoms of this kind of regression (Volkan, 2004 a). I borrow the term "regression" from individual psychology because I do not have a word that stands only for large-group regression. (Perhaps Hopper's (2003) term "incohesion" is better). When an ethnic, national, religious large group regresses it primarily becomes involved in certain large-group processes that serve to maintain, protect and repair the large-group identity. Since large groups as I described them here have their own specific characteristics that are built upon a centuries-old continuum and shared mental representation of history and myth, the examination of signs and symptoms of their regression should also include psychological processes that are *specific* to such large groups. In order to communicate with diplomats and others who must deal with international conflicts, clinicians need to go beyond a general description of the emergence of aggression in large groups, when they regress, and their shared paranoid or narcissistic sentiments, and refer to actual manifestations of regression within each specific large group.

Some major signs of large-group regression, such as *rallying around the leader*—as occurred in the USA immediately following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks—have been known since Freud. When Freud (1921) wrote about this phenomenon he did not say that he was referring to regressed groups. Robert Waelder (1930) brought to our attention the fact that Freud was describing regressed groups. Sometimes the members of a large group continue to rally around a leader for decades

and remain "regressed' in order to modify the existing characteristics of their large-group identity. In this situation what we observe is similar to an individual's "regressing in the service of progression and creativity." After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish people (in general) continued to rally around Kemal Atatürk, the leader of modern Turkey which was established in 1923, until his death in 1938 (Volkan and Itzkowitz, 1984). This was the main factor that supported modern Turkey's cultural revolution and the modification of characteristics of the Turks' large-group identity. On the other hand, in certain totalitarian regimes, people rally around the leader in order to feel personal security rather than to be punished. Without being aware of it, they internalize what Michael Śebek (1996) called "totalitarian objects," and blindly follow their leader by giving up many aspects of their individuality.

When a large group is in a regressed state, the personality and the internal world of the political leader assumes great importance concerning the manipulation (the "good" or the "bad") of what already exists within the large-group psychology. Therefore, the personality organization of Milošević (which I described elsewhere {Volkan, 1997}) was a crucial factor in what happened in the former Yugoslavia. Sometimes political leaders, such as Milošević, will bring the "red scarves" that belong to the large group out in the open and use them as tools of mass aggression.

Two types of splitting are also signs of large-group regression. First, a splitting between "us" and "them" (the enemy outside the regressed large group) becomes very strong and the "other" becomes a target for *dehumanization* (Bernard, Ottenberg and Redl, 1973). Second, in regressed large groups, following the initial rallying around the leader, a severe split occurs within the society itself, especially when the leader cannot maintain hope and cannot tame shared aggression. Just a few years after

September 11, 2001 we notice such a split in the USA. There are various reasons for this, but I believe that this also reflects the regressed state of America after the massive tragedy and after the American leadership's failure to separate "realistic" dangers from "fantasized" dangers and its inability to help tame the shared anxiety of the population.

A regression within the large group stimulates the population's sharing of primitive mental mechanisms in dealing with the external world. I am referring to *massive introjections* (for example, the population's "eating up" political propaganda without making much of an effort to analyze whether what is coming into their inner world is poisonous or not) and *projections,* such as happened under the totalitarian regime of Enver Hoxha, when Albanians built 7,500 bunkers throughout Albania in anticipation of an enemy attack that never occurred. Building these bunkers which would not stand against modern weapons was also a reflection of *magical thinking*. Within regressed societies we see various types of magical thinking. I believe that in the USA the expansion of religious fundamentalist thinking and the increased belief in millennialism reflects this phenomenon which, at the present time, is strongly influencing the political/societal movements in this country.

In a regressed society political, legal or traditional *borders* begin to symbolize the canvas of the large group tent. In other words, borders become highly psychologized and people, leaders, and official organizations become preoccupied with their protection. Since there is a realistic danger "out there," obviously borders need to be protected and because of this, it is difficult to study the psychological aspects of this preoccupation. When I was an inaugural Rabin Fellow at the Yitzhak Rabin Center for Israeli Studies in Tel Aviv during the spring of 2000, I had a chance to study the border psychology in Israel at a close range and to describe it (Volkan,

2004 a). Now, in the USA we are subjected to the influence of a border psychology almost daily, but because of the real (and fantasized) danger in the political propaganda, we may not be aware of this influence. At airports, for example, we deny the assault on our individual autonomy at the security check points because of the possibility of real danger, and subject ourselves to large-group psychology, and our individual psychology that propels us to rebel against the intrusion from outside is put in the background. When a large group's tent's canvas is attacked and torn apart, *minor differences* between the enemy groups become very major issues since minor differences are experienced as unchangeable "borders" separating one large group's identity from their enemy's identity.

When a large group regresses, societal processes that will remind everyone of the continuing existence of the canvas begin to appear. *Cultural amplifiers* (Mack1984), for example, are like designs on the canvas illustrating the specificity of that particular large-group identity. The group wants to "repaint" such designs on the canvas to show that the large-group identity still survives and to ease shared anxiety. But the group is helpless, angry, humiliated and is suffering from complicated mourning. Thus, when such designs are "repainted," they do not exactly look like the original designs; they are now sloppy and some aspects of them are exaggerated. In South Ossetia there was a playful cultural norm of kidnapping of brides. A girl would be symbolically kidnapped and married. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the establishment of the Republic of Georgia, bloody fights took place between ethnic Georgians and ethnic South Ossetians living within the same legal/political boundary of the Republic of Georgia. In fact, South Ossetians declared their own "independent state." Today aspects of large-group regression linger in South Ossetia as well as in

Georgia. The cultural kidnapping customs in South Ossetia have turned into horrible societal problems in the form of actual kidnappings and rapes of young women.

I have already described the reactivating as well as changing of function of chosen traumas. Also past glories (*chosen glories*) can be reactivated with good or malignant consequences. During the Gulf War, for instance, Saddam Hussein depended heavily on chosen glories to galvanize the Iraqi people support, even associating himself with Sultan Saladin who defeated the Christian Crusaders in the twelfth century. By reviewing a past event or a past hero, Saddam aimed to create the illusion a similar triumphal destiny was awaiting his people and that, like Saladin, he was a hero. Saddam, like Saladin, was born in Tikrit, but it did not matter to Saddam that Saladin was not an Arab but a Kurd, or that he had ruled from Egypt rather than Iraq or that Saddam had killed many Iraqi Kurds. The emphasis was principally on the ancient's hero's religious large-group identity. Often chosen glories and chosen traumas are condensed when the shared mental representation of a past large-group event is reactivated.

As clinicians we need to collaborate with scholar and practitioners from other fields to study the situation of each large group from many angles in order to find specific elements in large-group processes, to understand their underlying meanings and then begin to plan psychoanalytically informed political strategies for inducing progression within the large group or two or more groups in conflict.

My colleagues from the Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction (CSMHI) and I evolved a process to deal with the unfolding of large-group regression and conflicts between large groups. Nicknamed the "Tree Model" (Volkan, 1999) to reflect the slow growth and branching of a tree, this methodology has three basic

components or phases: (1) psychopolitical diagnosis of the situation, (2) psychopolitical dialogues between influential delegayes of opposing groups, and (3) collaborative actions and institutions that grow out of the dialogue process.

The first phase includes in-depth psychoanalytically informed interviews with a wide range of members of the large groups involved and an understanding begins to emerge concerning the main conscious and unconscious aspects that surround the situation that needs to be addressed. During the psychopolitical dialogues between influential representatives of opposing large groups that takes place in a series of multi-day meetings over several years, resistances against changing large group's "pathological" ways of protecting large-group identity are brought to the surface, articulated, and fantasized threats to large-group identity are interpreted so that realistic communication can take place. In order for the newly gained insights to have an impact on social and political policy, as well as on the populace at large, the final phase requires the collaborative development of concrete actions, programs, and institutions.

Our methodology allows several disciplines, including psychoanalysis, history and diplomacy, to work together to articulate and work through underlying psychological and historical aspects of the tensions. Then what is learned is operationalized so that more peaceful coexistence between large groups can be achieved and threats (especially the fantasized ones) to large-group identity coming from the "other" can be tamed. This leads to a progression within the large group.

The signs of a *large-group progression* include forming stable family, clan and professional subgroups, preserving individuality and having a society where individuals and professional organizations establish a capacity for compromise without damaging integrity (Rangell, 1980) and an ability to question what is "moral"

and “beautiful.” When a large group is not regressed, there is an increased emphasis on freedom of speech, having just and functioning civil institutions, especially a fair legal system and mental hospitals with human care (Stern, 2001), and halting devaluation of women and children.

When a large group is *not* in a regressed state, its members (in general) can wonder about the enemy’s “psychic reality.” To understand why the “other” behaved in malignant ways does not mean to forgive and forget what has happened. It means performing the difficult task of “humanizing” even the most destructive perpetrators. Horrible massive acts are not performed by “devils,” but by humans under specific influence of large-group psychology such as the one I call *purification*. After a massive trauma at the hand of enemies, after the reactivation of chosen traumas and glories, after a large group finding itself in a situation where the question, “Who are we now?” arises, a large group shakes its canvas to get rid of unwanted elements just like a snake sheds its skin. As far as I am concerned this is an obligatory process. The process of purification occurs on a spectrum, from getting rid of “foreign” words during which no one is killed to massive murders of “unwanted” subgroups within a society and to wars with “others.”

I hope it is clear that here I am not focusing on individuals who, due to their own individual psychological reasons, create chaos and tragedy such as the one that occurred when Timothy McVeigh blew up the Alfred Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April, 1995. I am instead focusing on large-group psychology and hurting and killing people in the name of large-group identity. By studying the ”psychic reality” of the enemy as a large group, new ways of dealing with the enemy and its threat may emerge instead of the attacked group’s responding to the enemy and the threat through developing signs of its own regression (Volkan, in press).

Al Qaeda divided the world into two categories. After September 11 America (again I am not speaking of individuals here, but referring to a general large-group process) did the same and ideas such as the "clash of civilizations or religions" directly or indirectly was supported within the society. A division of the world into a clear cut "us" and "them" is a sign of large-group regression. Responding to an enemy in a non-regressed fashion, psychologically speaking, is a very difficult task. Realistic and logical actions easily are contaminated with emotions supporting the wish to do to the enemy what it did to us. I do not think that humans (as large groups) have ever developed the idea or ability to refrain from being like their enemies once they feel threatened or hurt.

I need to be careful *not* to be misunderstood here. I am not referring, for example, to what Nazis did and what the Allies did during World War II and I am not saying that the Allies were like the Nazis. Many factors such as historical circumstances, reactivation of past victimizations, the leader's personality organization, existing military power and, most importantly, the degree of large-group regression can make a large-group dehumanize the "other" and be terribly cruel. In dealing with such an extremely regressed large group, the opposing group need not be identically as regressed as the perpetrating group. When I speak of *a similarity between enemies* I am referring to certain large-group processes without considering the degree of their outcome. First, I am simply saying that when a large group's identity is threatened, the threatened large group automatically begins to hurt the aggressors' large-group identity, thus the attacked group begins to take on similarities to the perpetrator. Second, both groups utilize shared mental mechanisms such as introjection, projection, denial, dissociation, isolation, rationalization and intellectualization in their consciously or unconsciously motivated political

propaganda. This comes from their leadership and/or is wished for and supported by the society. Third, humiliating, hurting and killing people in the name of large-group identity become acceptable by both sides (Volkan, in press). If the leadership does not provide a kind of reality testing that includes an understanding of the enemy's (as large group) "psychic reality" and shows some attempts to respond to it in humane ways, dangers become magnified and further regression sets in or is maintained. Therefore, the idea of a large group becoming like its enemy is an area that needs to be studied openly again and again until new possibilities for different responses (above and beyond the necessity to use the military) can be conceptualized. In fact new strategies in international relations without succumbing into large-group regression can be considered, and the so-called "diplomatic channels" need not be closed until a psychopolitical evaluation of the situation is completed.

There is a beauty in human diversity, and most people can enjoy human diversity when they are not preoccupied with the pressures and anxieties associated with the repair and maintenance of their large-group tent's canvas (large-group identity). Recognizing the beauty of diversity, however, often requires a great deal of work. I believe that clinicians, when they are willing to take part in interdisciplinary efforts, have much to offer those who wish to encourage diversity while resolving conflict. They also will benefit a great deal from studying large-group psychology in its own right if they are involved in such efforts.

Thank you for listening to me.

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Vamık D. Volkan, M.D., D.L.F.A.P.A., F.A.C.Psa.
Doctor of Medical Science honoris causa with University of Kuopio, Finland
Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry
University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA.
Senior Erik Erikson Scholar
The Austen Riggs Center,Stockbridge, MA.
Training and Supervising Analyst Emeritus
Washington Psychoanalytic Institute, Washington, DC
vdv@virginia.edu
www.pitchstonepublishing.com

Response to Vamik Volkan's Plenary Lecture

'Large-Group Identity, Large-Group Regression and Massive Violence'

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Some of you are used to bombings once a week or so, but I am not. Nor are my family. Nor are my patients, colleagues and friends. Nowadays, every Thursday, London is covered by a swarm of police wearing yellow jackets, I suppose in order to make them easier to see, but I wonder if it is only psychoanalysts like myself who are aware of the unconscious meanings of 'yellow jackets' (Hopper, 1991). This is a new development, and it is extremely painful and disconcerting.

Clearly, the study of social trauma and mass violence is extraordinarily important. It is essential for all of us to work together to understand social trauma and its vicissitudes more deeply and more extensively than we do. Vamik Volkan is one of the few American psychoanalysts who are attempting to apply psychoanalytical perspectives to the study of group processes which involve aggression and violence. He is really making an effort to understand such processes, and one indication of this is the fact that he is here in Molde, engaging in dialogue with group analysts, sharing his ideas and listening to our ideas. Many psychoanalysts do not take the risk of engaging in dialogue with members of adjacent disciplines, especially with group analysts and psychoanalytical group psychotherapists, and Vamik's involvement with us is to be welcomed.

An informal network of group analysts are thinking about social trauma and mass violence, for example, Yvonne Agazarian, Miriam Berger, Avi Berman, Susan Gantt, Ivan Urlić, Haim Weinberg and Gerhard Wilke, to mention only a few colleagues who I see here today. Our ideas overlap, and we have all been influenced by Vamik's work. For example, while I was listening to Vamik's lecture, I remembered that I, too, have written about snakes and the importance of shedding skin as a kind of metaphor for mourning and the development of personal identity (Hopper, 2003a). Similarly, in his Foulkes Lecture Urlic (2004) presented data about the relevance of a pet snake to a group of mourning veterans, and in my discussion of his lecture I (Hopper, 2005) referred to the archetypical reptile who eats its own tail, and who in Jungian metapsychology is called the Uroborus. This is a very powerful and meaningful image.

I am also impressed by the strong connections between my early work on textiles and the problem of context (Hopper, 1982), and Vamik's use of the tent as a metaphor for the common social-psychological space of a 'people' who are geographically scattered. Whereas I have focused on carpets, rugs, and tapestries as collective productions used to define domestic and sacred locations, and to commemorate narratives of chosen trauma and chosen glories, Vamik has focused on the tent and its woven material, used to establish social boundaries, collective identity and a sense of safety. Do we share pre-conscious preoccupations with the safety and welfare of Semitic peoples? Certainly, Vamik's idea that the symbolic connotations of the tent warrant reflection and interpretation reminds me of Berger's (1990) discussion of the institutionalisation of 'the sacred canopy', located in Jerusalem for the protection of the Jewish People wandering among hostile nations. As you know, the 'sacred canopy' is the *chuppah* beneath which Jews make their marriage vows,

thus creating from two persons one couple from whom children will hopefully be born; the sacred canopy also refers to the firmament itself, a kind of boundary between secular chaos and spiritual order. Of course, other Peoples also make use of textiles in this way, reflecting the configuration and the tension between many threads and one whole.

I have been asked to respond to Vamik's lecture from my own point of view, drawing on my own work, and I am pleased to be able to do this. I will not force a debate between us, but try to develop our dialogue. There are several conceptual problems and differences between Vamik's perspective and my own. We should begin with a discussion about the definitions of various key concepts concerning social formations (Gould and Kolb, 1964). This is not just my being obsessionally systematic. Definitions of concepts have theoretical and clinical implications. For example, whereas Vamik talks about 'large groups', I would say that he is not really talking about groups at all, at least not as we know them. When he refers to 'ethnic groups' he is using a concept that is virtually a contradiction in terms, a kind of oxymoron, because most of the time ethnic groups are not 'groups' but 'social categories' or 'categorisations'. When ethnic groups become more than social categories, when they are structured in ways that suggest that it is appropriate to call them 'ethnic groups', we have an unusual set of problems and questions, which is not merely a matter of size.

I distinguish between 'organism', 'person', 'group', 'organisation', 'society', and even the 'world'. (A person, as you remember, is different from a human organism; the very notion of a person implies the prior internalisation of society and culture.) I also distinguish between 'crowds', 'audiences', 'participants in a congress', etc. These are social formations, but they are not groups. Social categories and social

formations are not necessarily social systems. Moreover, there are many kinds of social system. They vary in terms of their structures and dynamics (Hopper, 1975). Not all social systems are groups or even like groups. We have also learned that although we don't know the demarcation points with precision, it is necessary to distinguish small groups from median groups from large groups.

Group analysts think in terms of open social systems. Open social systems are more or less inter-penetrating, and provide contexts for one another. Groups are open social systems with a minimal degree of role differentiation and specialisation, and they are highly dependent for their goods and services on the open social systems that comprise their contexts. Thus, the system that one chooses to focus on and to analyse involves both theoretical and political choices, although these choices are not always conscious.

Societies are open social systems with territories and specific political situations. A society is virtually the penultimate context of any particular group within it. I suppose the ultimate context is the world itself, or even the universe, but the universe lacks territory, as far as I know.

Although I use the metaphor 'traumatised societies', I am not entirely happy with it, because only persons with bodies can be traumatised in the sense of being wounded or experiencing the rupture of their safety shields, or experiencing an unconscious enactment of Oedipal fantasies, etc. The metaphor of traumatised societies is based on the idea that a societal social system is at best *like* a person and at worst *is* a person, and this has many political and even clinical implications of which practitioners are usually unaware. For example, the notion of 'social pathology' almost certainly implies a set of values and a clinical/social work agenda rather than a more detached and value-neutral position, involving attempts to understand the

dynamics of a particular system. However, the metaphor of 'traumatised society' has merit in connection with situations in which very large numbers of people and/or a high percentage of the population of a society have experienced trauma themselves, or have been on the receiving end of the deposited representations of those who have, such as parents, grand-parents, etc. (Some people prefer the phrase 'broken society', based on the metaphor that the social system is like a machine, as opposed to an organism; the machine or mechanical metaphor carries its own set of political/clinical implications, such as the conviction that a system can be fixed without regard to the feelings of its members.)

When a society or any other kind of social system has been traumatised, either in the sense that a large number or a high proportion of its members have been wounded, this social system and its members are likely to regress in particular ways. For example, the inter-penetration among open social systems increases, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish the boundaries between a system and its context. In fact, such social systems become more alike. Complex social systems that have been traumatised become more simple: societies become like organisations, organisations become like groups, groups become like persons, and persons become more in touch with their bodies than with their secondary groups, perhaps even more than with their primary groups. So, when traumatised, and perhaps only when traumatised, it becomes relevant and useful to think about large complex social systems, such as societies, as though they were 'groups', and, at the same time, therefore, in terms of 'persons'. Thus, under these conditions sociology becomes more relevant to the study of persons, and psychoanalysis becomes more relevant to the study of social systems, and group analysis becomes more relevant to the study of the entire range of open social systems. Moreover, whereas generally we try to be

careful about mixing up these two forms of discourse, that is, the one that pertains to persons and the other which pertains to social systems, or the one that is essentially psychoanalytical, and the other that is essentially sociological, the concepts and theories concerning the personal functioning of traumatised people are most helpful when we are attempting to describe traumatised social systems (Hopper, 2003b).

One implication of these definitions and of this way of thinking, which is essentially a group analytical way of thinking, is a paradox, as follows: Societies vary in terms of their structures. The social cohesion of societies that are large and complex, like industrial societies of the 20th Century (I am less certain about post-industrial societies), is based on the integration of their interaction system, focused mainly on their economies, with special reference to economic production and the world of work. Such societies are extremely vulnerable to trauma, because integration means that if certain connections are broken, the society is likely to collapse. This is very different from what happens in more simple, so-called 'primitive' societies, whose cohesion is based on the solidarity of their normative system or the coherence of their communication system. When they are traumatised, such societies divide in various ways, and replicate themselves, but they do not collapse. However, when complex societies are traumatised, cohesion is reduced, and something happens in them that is not supposed to happen. What is this? Ethnic categories, that is, collections of people who have in common certain features such as skin colour, language, religious beliefs, etc, which are not supposed to have anything to do with systems of production, or anything to do with social cohesion, suddenly become more important. Of course, by 'supposed' I mean 'in terms of classical sociological theories of social cohesion'. However, in the context of a traumatised large scale complex society, ethnicity becomes 'sexualised'. In their search for safety, families and

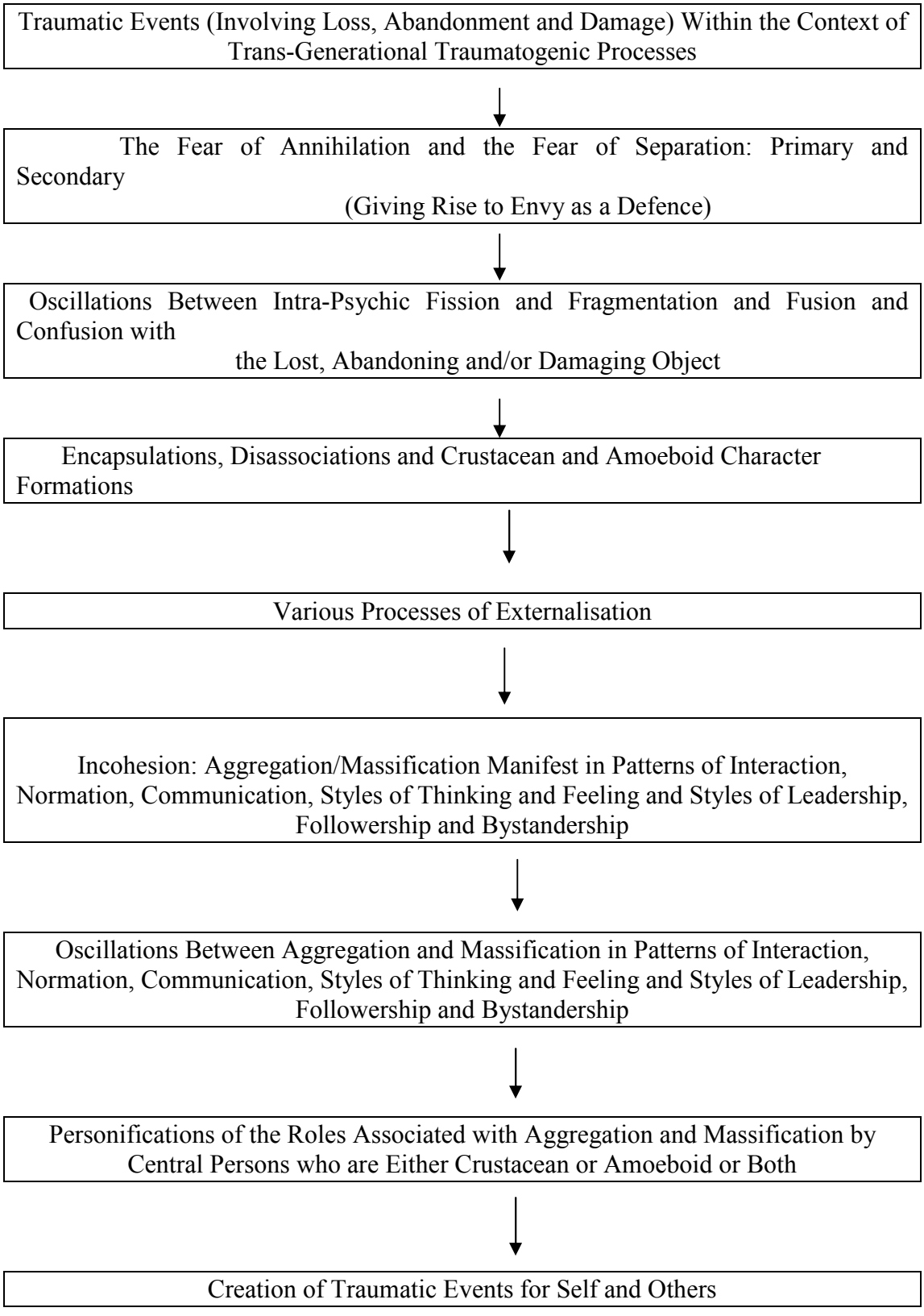
primary groupings, which are deeply connected with ethnic collections or categories, increase their 'consciousness of kind' (Giddings, 1924). Thus, following social trauma, ethnic categories become ethnic groups, and ethnic groups become a very important source of personal and social identification.

These ethnic groups become like autistic islands in the mind of a psychotic or autistic person who is suffering extraordinary anxiety. They reflect the enactment and the social expression of impurities in the minds of traumatised people, impurities based on painful introjects who cannot be digested or metabolised. They are very important to anyone who attempts to merge his self with his ethnic group. They also become very important to the society as a whole, because such ethnic groups become the basis for the development of sub-groups, and, therefore, contra-groups. In other words, in the context of traumatogenic processes, ethnic categories, which have nothing to do with social cohesion, become completely relevant to social cohesion, because as ethnic groups they become the basis of safety and social identity for the traumatised people who are members of them. Simultaneously, the traumatised members of the wider society perceive these ethnic groups as concrete impurities, and as sub-groups and potential contra-groups who are or who might become responsible for Incohesion. Ethnic groups become the source of actual and potential aggregation, against which the only social defence is massification.

I will now try to summarise my theory of Incohesion as simply as I can. (I regard Incohesion as the fourth basic assumption, but this meta-psychological issue is not pertinent to our work here today.) A fuller statement is available in *Traumatic Experience in the Unconscious Life of Groups* (Hopper, 2003b). However, it may be useful to keep in mind a diagram or flow chart of the overall theory, as I go through the theory step by step:

Diagram

A Summary of the Theory of Incohesion: Aggregation/Massification of (ba) I:A/M



1. The fear of annihilation is rooted in traumatic experience, and envy arises as a defence against the shame and helplessness associated with it. The phenomenology of the fear of annihilation involves non-developmental oscillation between fission and fragmentation, in the first instance, and fusion and confusion, in the second. Each pole of the fear of annihilation is associated with its own distinctive anxieties, and the phenomenology of each pole functions as a defence against the anxieties associated with its opposite. The main, overall defence against the fear of annihilation and its vicissitudes is encapsulation. The two main types of encapsulated character structure associated with the fear of annihilation and its phenomenology are crustacean and contact shunning, on the one hand, and amoeboid and merger hungry, on the other. Various kinds of addiction and perversion are also associated with these two kinds of encapsulated character structures.
2. As a defence against pain, the phenomenology of the fear of annihilation is projected into the external world, and manifest in patterns of interaction, normation and communication, as well as in styles of thinking and feeling and styles of leadership and followership. I call the manifestations within the external world of these projected and introjected processes 'Incohesion: Aggregation/ Massification' or (ba)'I: A/M'. States of aggregation, on the one hand, and of massification, on the other, can be denoted in these terms. Incohesive social systems tend to oscillate between these bi-polar states. Incohesion: Aggregation/ Massification or (ba) I:A/M occurs in all groups of traumatised people, and in all traumatised groups and group-like social systems. Of course, (ba) I:A/M can be a transitory phenomenon, but its appearance always indicates that the group has been traumatised.

3. The roles associated with processes of Incohesion: Aggregation/ Massification are likely to be personified by traumatised, contact shunning crustacean characters, and traumatised, merger hungry amoeboid characters, the former being vulnerable to the suction of roles that are typical of aggregation, and the latter, of massification. These patterns of personification are, therefore, typical of traumatised groups and group-like social systems.

   The personifiers of processes of incohesion should be distinguished from the leaders of work groups. However, some leaders are split in such a way that they may be both leaders and personifiers. Moreover, when groups are under the sway of basic assumption processes both leaders and personifiers are likely to exist. With respect to processes of incohesion, a charismatic leader may evince amoeboid characteristics, but it is also possible that the charismatic leader will be associated with a number of crustacean and amoeboid personifiers. The personification of (ba) I:A/M is pertinent to our attempts to understand the motivations of terrorists, and I will return to this in due course. I would also mention here that personification is absolutely central to our clinical work with difficult patients, because they are likely to fill the roles that are generated by the processes of incohesion, and it is of course relevant to our understanding the problems of corruption in traumatised organisations and organisations in traumatised societies.

4. Aggression is obviously essential to states of aggregation. However, less obviously, it is also essential to both the instigation and the maintenance of massification, in which one of the central dynamics is the compulsion to purge all parts of the massification 'mother' that may prevent a merger with her, such as distracting smells, colours, textures and words, for example, the nipple rather the breast itself; especially important is the elimination of the father and any of his

parts that are perceived to block access and merger, for example, his phallus, his rules and his manifestations in male siblings. Within this context, the work group leader is especially vulnerable, as is anyone who is perceived to have maintained idiosyncrasies of personal identity. Crustacean and amoeboid characters are likely to be both the perpetrators of aggression and the victims of aggression, partly because they remain unable to mourn their losses thoroughly and authentically, and partly because they seek roles that provide them with skins of identity. Thus, although traumatogenic processes are the source of Incohesion: Aggregation/Massification, these oscillating forms of Incohesion are also a source of further traumatic experience, which is why the relationship is recursive.

I will now list some forms of aggression that are typical of massification. In terms of internal or intra-systemic dynamics, and in terms of attempting to maintain a state of 'same-ness':

1. Ritualisation, sexualisation of relationships and actions involving perverse processes, and perversion itself. It's not for nothing that in the lead up to World War II so many forms of sexual perversions dominated what could be called 'sexual culture'.
2. Anonymisation of others and of the self, in both personal and collective forms, in the service of envious attacks, as well as envy pre-emption expressed in terms of ignoring people, not recognising people and the groups that are important to them.
3. Corrupt moral judgements and corrupt sanctions in terms of these judgments. When organisations are traumatised, or societies are traumatised, moral corruption seeps into every personal relationship and

every committee as manifest in constant compromises that have nothing to do with the task.

4. Peripheralisation and marginalisation involving demonising and scapegoating of various kinds. A series occurs, starting with ignoring and moving on to shunning, banishment, and assassination. Of course, in organisations we do not assassinate people, we only give them premature heart attacks. We assassinate their characters, and make their lives almost unliveable.
5. The purification of language. For example, at the Institute of Psychoanalysis in London, attempts have been made by the dominant sub-groups or contra-groups to purify scientific language and theory. I have seen people so red in the face that one would think that they might kill one another in connection with whether they should use the expression 'projection into' or 'projection onto'. Such debate is warranted and healthy, of course, but equally it can be regressive, especially when the debate does not actually occur, but is circumvented through enactments of seating arrangements, as seen in the fact that Kleinians sit in one section of the audience, and Independents in another, and Contemporary Freudians in yet another, etc. These contra-groups do not sit next to one another for fear of a kind of contamination. Similar processes characterise debate or the absence of it in the scientific life of group analysis. Although Foulkes said that he welcomed debate, 'Foulkesians' hardly tolerate it. At the Institute of Group Analysis in London Bion is still not taught properly, the study of group dynamics hardly exists, and many of Foulkes' ideas are taught in the form of aphorisms, such as 'Trust the group'.

In terms of inter-systemic relations, victims are shifted from the core of the system to its periphery, as though they were infected, or a splinter under the skin, a traumatic introject. They are turned into contra-groups who are against those sub-groups who are at the core of the system. 'Other-ness' is required in order to maintain a sense of 'we-ness'. In order to have a sense of 'We are.', we need to assert who 'We are not.'. This is a process of pseudo-speciation, through which certain people and their groupings are defined as in-human species. When people and their groups are defined as in-human, we can do whatever we want to them. For example, in the same way that we can kill animals, we can kill people who have been defined as in-human.

In retaliation, people who have been excluded from the body politic, denigrated, humiliated and denuded of all essential elements of personal and social identity feel compelled to assert their identity, but they are unable to do so without adopting manoeuvres and strategies of revenge and retaliation. In order to cope with their suffering, people who have been the objects of such purification processes feel compelled to take revenge on those who are perceived to be responsible for their suffering and victim-hood. This is especially true when they have been unable to mourn authentically and completely. More specifically, in order to rid themselves of their own feelings of terror, to turn passive into active, to express their sadism, and to take control of themselves and their environment, victims of purification processes feel compelled to repeat their own experiences, by and through creating states of terror and victim-hood for those who are perceived as responsible for the purification processes. (I presume that suicide bombers use their own bodies, plus simple explosives because they have nothing else to use and feel that they have nothing else to lose.) These forms of retaliatory and revengeful social violence also have a

communicative function in that people who have experienced terror feel compelled to repeat their experience by creating it in others as a way of communicating that which seems to be ineffable and un-communicable in ordinary language (for example, Akhtar, 1999).

Terrorising assertions of identity function to provide a sense of merger with those who terrorists seek to destroy. Ironically, terrorists who assert their identity by terrorising those who they perceive to have excluded them, provide for themselves an ultimate merger. Only through forensic science is it possible to distinguish a suicide bomber from his/her victims. This must be part of the illusion that fusion and confusion of the self and the other will function as a defence against the anxieties associated with feeling in a state of fission and fragmentation. As Vamik has argued, such processes are repeated in connection with 'chosen trauma', 'time collapse' and 'deposited representations', which means that when mourning and reparation have not and cannot take place, at least not thoroughly and authentically, mass social violence is highly likely to be perpetuated across the generations.

In conclusion, I would like to remind you of a few further points:

1. The motivation for perpetuating these forms of aggression is unconscious. Nowadays we are embarrassed to use the term 'unconscious', but this motivation is in fact unconscious.
2. These forms of aggression involve what I would call a 'narrative of signs', which is both a paradox and an oxymoron (Nitzgen, 2005). Narratives are essential to the group analytical way of thinking about group processes and about the symbolic life of persons within them. However, ordinarily narratives require symbolisation and sophisticated language. Yet, when pain is so great that one cannot think, because

connections have been violated between body, mind and society, communication can only occur through projective and introjective identification involving signs and sensations (Green, 1975; Pines, 1998). This is the world of borborygmi, the world of the body rather than the world of the mind, the world of atonal music. When one listens to a person describe such pain, one's stomach growls, because one's heart has broken.

3. I completely agree with Vamik and another colleague of ours, Jerrold Post from Washington, D.C., who argue that these forms of aggression always take place 'in the name of God', because if everybody believes in Him, He becomes the basis for purification and, in turn, massification. In his present work, Vamik connects 'the name of God' with 'the name of identity' (Volkan, in press) . Based on the unconscious fear of annihilation and its vicissitudes, impotence and ignorance are the basis of illusions of omnipotence and omniscience. Let us consider the Bible (which is the most important book that any group analyst or psychoanalyst can read), both the Old and the New Testaments, throughout which there occur many attempts to explore Incohesion: Aggregation/Massification. For example, in the Old Testament Moses attempted to free his people from Pharaoh under whose rule the Jews were suffering. From memory, I recall that Moses asked God 'Who should I call you before I go to Pharaoh to negotiate on our behalf?' God replied "'I am who I am'. Call me 'I Am'." After centuries of slavery and the development of an identity of victim-hood, it was necessary for Moses to recover a sense of healthy personal and

social identity, and to be able to assert his new identity in a constructive way. Similarly, in the New Testament, Jesus said 'I Am' twelve times: I am the knowledge, I am the truth, and so on… Historically, the development of the New Testament occurred during a time of tremendous social crisis and social trauma involving the assertion and maintenance of Roman dominance over the Jewish community. First the heel of Egypt, and then the heel of Rome! As we know, Moses and Jesus were very different kinds of character, but each of them personified a particular role associated with (ba) I:A/M.

4. The first letters of 'Incohesion: Aggregation/Massification' are an acronym for 'I am'. My theory of (ba) I:A/M is a theory of the assertion of identity when identity is under threat. Although these three words 'Incohesion', 'Aggregation', and 'Massification' are absolutely correct in the terminology of sociology, I rediscovered them during a period of time when it was necessary for me to assert my own identity, because my own identity was under threat. I had to say 'I am' for myself and for those who were closest to me, not in terms of my personal identity, but of my social identity, although, as I have emphasised repeatedly, the personal and the social are completely intertwined, two sides of the same coin. I am thinking about a particular period of time and space in which I felt under pressure as a Jew and as an American living in London, and as a kind of mongrel professional, namely, a sociologist, group analyst, and psychoanalyst. I felt, and was made to feel, impure and out of place, both helpless and at the same time an object of envy. I am thinking about my life in

London during the first major oil crisis of the late 1970's, the time of the first Gulf War in the early 1990's, and more recently during the year or so after the so-called '9/11', which has led to the current war in Iraq. Although (ba) I:A/M is more or less ubiquitous, it becomes more acute in the context of traumatogenic processes. Identity is more relational than solipsistically individual, and, therefore, following attacks on their social connections, people need to assert their identities. I wonder if Vamik, as a Turkish-American living in a country other than the one in which he was born, and as an object relations psychoanalyst as opposed to a more classical drive theorist, has not had experiences similar to my own?

5. In Britain today there are approximately fifty nationalities who have at least one thousand people who were born in another country. Although in Britain the idea of pluralism is comparatively new, and in the United States pluralism is a core value, in reality neither country has been much of a melting pot. Nevertheless, the transformation of ethnic categories into ethnic groups is not one way. This transformation is reversible. In the context of trauma, ethnic categories become ethnic groups, and in the context of conciliation ethnic groups become ethnic categories. Of course ethnic groups are not only a refuge for traumatised people, they are also a source of positive and creative experience, and a source of diversity concerning many basic features of life itself. Still… what determines the shift from negative to positive ethnic group formations and our experience of them is a topic for another plenary lecture.

I hope that what Vamik and I have learned from our studies of the 20th Century and its history will help moderate similar processes that are now occurring in the 21st Century, which belongs more to our children and our grandchildren than it does to us. This does not give us permission to abdicate from our moral, political and intellectual responsibilities.

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The Group Analytic Society, Registered UK Charity Number 281387, invites donations from members and others in any amount for it's General Fund. Donations demonstrate a belief that Group Analysis contributes to local and international communications and relations. Donations may also be given "in memory" or "in recognition" of a person in our community or elsewhere. Future discussions may identify a new fund for the Social Application of GA in the modern world. Members and others may discuss donations with any member of the GAS Management Committee, email drstorck@caregiving-online.com, or contact the Society via email to admin@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk. Tax considerations will be based on legal requirements in the donor's region.

Submitted by Lauren E. Storck, MC Member

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In Memoriam.

Dear Sirs

I am sorry to inform you that Ian Boardman, an Associate member of your society, passed away recently.

I would be grateful if you could, therefore, remove his name from your mailing list.

The full address is:

Ian Boardman
Garden House
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Denbigh
Clwyd
LL16 3DE

I would be grateful if you could confirm this action in order to minimise the distress to his family.

Thank you

Godfrey Jackson

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Foundation course in Group psychotherapy (1 year part-time designed as an introduction to the Diploma or for general interest) Thursday late afternoon/eve

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For more information on any of these programme contact Professor Diane Waller on diane.waller@virgin.net or write to her at: Group and Intercultural Therapy, Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way, London SE146NW.

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*

Dear colleagues,

It was a great pleasure to be with you in Molde and to share together beautiful Norway and meaningful experiences.
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Attached please find details about the conference and about your visit in Israel.
As per many requests Abstracts can be submitted till September 4 2005.
We are looking forward to meet with you all and will try to make your stay in Israel a pleasant and enjoyable experience

Looking forward to hear from you

Please visit the Conference website at http://www.congress.co.il/imagine2006

Dr Pnina Rappoport
Co- Chair of the conference

Suzi Shoshani
Chair of the Organizing Committee

*

For further information, please contact G.A.S.
Tel. 0207 316 1824; Fax 0207 316 1824
Email: admin@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk
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CONFERENCE ACCOMMODATION IN LONDON

Visitors attending events held at 1 Daleham Gardens, London NW3 5BY might find it convenient to stay nearby, i.e. in Hampstead or Belsize Park. London hotels need to be booked well in advance and by credit card.

Hotels (at between £60 & £95 per person per night)

The Swiss Cottage Hotel at 4 Adamson Road, London NW3**,** has been well recommended by members who have stayed there in the past. They offer us a special rate of £60 for a single room: when booking, ask for Alex and say that you are a Group-Analytic Society member.
(Swiss Cottage Hotel, Tel. 0207 722 2281),

Dawson's House at 72 Canfield Gardens, London NW6, is a small, rather basic hotel at the cheaper end of the local price range. It is situated, two minutes from Finchley Road Tube Station and 15 minutes walk from Daleham Gardens.
(Dawson's House Hotel –Tel. 0207 624 0079).

The House Hotel at 2 Rosslyn Hill, London NW3 1PH is a more pricey, but rather nicer place less than five minutes from Daleham Gardens.
(The House Hotel, Tel. 0207 431 8000, Fax 0207 433 1775)

The Forte Hotel at 215 Haverstock Hill, London NW3 4RB is a Trust House Forte chain hotel in the same area with all major hotel facilities.
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