

IDENTITET I PROCESI U „PRAVOJ“ VELIKOJ GRUPI

/ IDENTITY AND PROCESSES IN THE “TRUE LARGE GROUP”

Predrag Jovanović

PRIJE UVODA/BEFORE THE INTRODUCTION

Kada se uredništvo pred gotovo dvije godine odlučilo jedan tematski broj časopisa Psihoterapija posvetiti srednje velikim i velikim grupama, kolega Predrag Jovanović izabrao je temu Identitet velike grupe za svoj prilog želeći u njemu iznijeti svoja dugogodišnja iskustva i razmišljanja.

Ubrzo po dogovoru prionuo je poslu i prilikom slanja prvih tekstova, on je poslao svoj, kojeg je trebalo doraditi i urediti. Nažalost sam nije stigao to uraditi radi prerane nagle smrti.

Međutim uredništvo je smatralo postojeći tekst zanimljivim i vrijednim objavljivanja. U tu svrhu Ljiljana Moro i Tanja Frančišković poduhvatile su se doradivanja i opreme Predragovog teksta. Članak koji čitate rezultat je tog rada. No važno je napomenuti da su kostur, osnova i ideje iznjete u članku i veći dio teksta u potpunosti očuvane kako ih je formulirao pokojni Predrag Jovanović.

/ Nearly two years ago, when the editorial board of the journal Psihoterapija decided to dedicate a thematic issue of the journal to the topic of median and large groups, our colleague Predrag Jovanović chose to write about the identity of the large group, with a desire to present his many years of experience and reflections.

He soon got down to work, and when the first texts were submitted, he sent in his own text, which needed revision and editing. Unfortunately, he was unable to do this himself due to his sudden and untimely death.

Nevertheless, the editorial board considered the existing text to be interesting and worthy of publication. For this purpose, Ljiljana Moro and Tanja Frančišković took on the task of revising and completing Predrag's text. The article you are reading is the result of these efforts. It is important to note that that the framework, foundations and ideas presented in the article, as well as the majority of the text, have been fully preserved as formulated by the late Predrag Jovanović.

SAŽETAK/SUMMARY

Od nekoliko oblika velikih grupa, u ovom se tekstu bavim tkz. pravom velikom grupom i nastankom i održanjem njenog identiteta. Opisani su znaci i pojavnici oblici regresije unutar velike grupe koja doživljava ugroženost svojeg identiteta i način kako ti fenomeni utječu na pojedinca i određuju njegov vlastiti identitet. Razmotrene su i mogućnosti progresije ali i sumnje u mogućnost progresije nakon razornih regresivnih pojava unutar velike grupe-društva.

/ Out of the several forms of large groups, this text focuses on the so-called true large group, and the creation and maintenance of its identity. It describes the signs and manifestations of regression within a large group experiencing a threat to its identity, and the way these phenomena affect the individuals and shape their own identities. It also reflects on the possibilities of progression, as well as doubts regarding the feasibility of progression after the occurrence of destructive regressive phenomena within the large group, i.e. the society.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI / KEYWORDS

identitet / *identity*, velika grupa / *large group*, bazične pretpostavke / *basic assumptions*

Predrag Jovanović, psihijatar, edukator iz grupne analize, Privatna praksa Rijeka i Ljubljana.

/ Predrag Jovanović, psychiatrist, group analysis educator, Private practice in Rijeka and Ljubljana.

TO LINK TO THIS ARTICLE: <https://doi.org/10.24869/psihei.2025.44>

UVOD

Unatrag par desetljeća interes za zbi-
vanja u velikim grupama postupno ra-
ste na filozofskom, antropološkom, so-
ciološkom i političkom planu. Počinje
se uvažavati da je velika grupa ljudska
svakodnevica i da se društvene poja-
ve ne mogu razumjeti bez razumjeva-
nja zakonitosti koje u grupama vladaju
kao i obrasce po kojima velike grupe
funkcioniraju. Sve to naravno ima svo-
je biološke, povijesne ali i psihološke
korjene. Interes za velike grupe je po-
rastao i nastojanjima da velike grupe u
kojima ljudi žive, postanu još veće, do
čega je doveo proces globalizacije ali i
razvoj tehnologije. Bez razumijevanja
grupnih procesa u velikim grupama,
teško ćemo razumjeti i obrnute proce-

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, interest in
large groups has been gradually growing
at the philosophical, anthropological, so-
ciological, and political levels. It has been
increasingly recognised that the large
group is a part of everyday life, and that
social phenomena cannot be understood
without understanding the principles
that govern the groups and the patterns
by which large groups function. All of
this, of course, has its biological, histori-
cal, but also psychological roots. Interest
in large groups has also grown due to ef-
forts to make the large groups in which
people live even larger, which is one of
the effects of globalization and techno-
logical development. Without a proper
understanding of the processes that take
place within large groups, it becomes



se koji se javljaju kao protuteža globalizaciji-zatvaranje u „manje“ velike grupe po nacionalnim, vjerskim ili nekim drugim razdjelnicama.

Interes za mogući terapijski učinak i uopće mogućnosti rada u velikim grupama već je više desetljeća u fokusu skupine grupnih analitičara, a taj interes postupno sve više raste unutar grupnoanalitičkih udruga. Kroz rad u velikim grupama pokušava se uočiti kako one funkcioniraju, koje su njihove mogućnosti i koji su dosezi u lječidbenom i korektivnom smislu ili jednostavno da li se radom u takvim grupama može polučiti neka promjena u pozitivnom smjeru što god to značilo.

ŠTO JE VELIKA GRUPA?

Ako gledamo po broju to je svaka grupa od 30 ljudi na više. Ali ne možemo tvrditi da je svaka skupina ljudi veća od 30 i više automatski velika grupa.

Didaktički rečeno možemo razlikovati **terapijske velike grupe** u kojima proučavamo funkcioniranje pojedinaca uključene u takve skupine u kontroliranim uvjetima kao i uspostavljanje i razvijanje mnogih interakcija između pojedinaca u takvoj skupini prema drugim pojedincima i grupi kao cjelini. Ako je cilj takvih okupljanja nejasan ili nije zadan takva grupa regredira u

difficult to understand the counter-processes that arise as a reaction to globalization, such as withdrawal into “smaller” large groups, divided along national, religious, or other dividing lines.

Interest in the potential therapeutic effect and the general possibilities of working with large groups has been the focus of certain group analysts for several decades, and this interest has been steadily growing among the group-analytic associations. Through work in large groups, attempts are made to observe how they function, what their capacities are, and what their reach may be in a healing or corrective sense, or simply, whether working in such groups can bring about some kind of positive change, whatever that may mean.

WHAT IS A LARGE GROUP?

In terms of numbers, a large group is any group of 30 people or more. Yet, we cannot say that every gathering of 30 or more people automatically constitutes a large group.

Didactically speaking, we can distinguish **therapeutic large groups**, in which we observe the functioning of individuals included in such groups under controlled conditions, as well as the establishment and development of many interactions between individuals within the group, both toward other individuals and the group as a whole. If the purpose of such gatherings is not clear or defined, such

svom ponašanju i funkcioniranju. U pojedincima se javljaju teški i neprijatni osjećaji koji uključuju primitivne mentalne mehanizme. Ti mehanizmi imaju zadatak sačuvati pojedinca od psihičkog rascjepa i fragmentacije.

Zatim postoje, usudio bih se kazati, „**prave velike grupe**“ po etničkoj, nacionalnoj ili religijskoj osnovi u koju pojedinci „ulaze“ samim rođenjem unutar neke šire zajednice.

I na kraju, postoje velike grupe koje neki nazivaju još i **masom** (1) a stvaraju se najčešće kao navijačke skupine i nemaju sve one karakteristike koje imaju etničke ili nacionalne ili religijske skupine. Nemaju izgrađen sistem funkcioniranja niti stabilnu strukturu. Kada su suočeni sa prijetnjom vanjske katastrofe ili se katastrofa počinje događati, te skupine se brzo raspadaju i nastaje kaos. Neko vrijeme se kaos nastavlja i po prekidu vanjske katastrofe.

Za ovu priliku uzeo sam slobodu da se malo detaljnije i opširnije osvrnem na tzv. terapijsku veliku grupu i „prave“ velike grupe. Razlozi za to su pomalo praktični i osobni. Prvo, nakon više od tri desetljeća profesionalnog iskustva sa malim skupinama i povremenog učešća u terapijskim velikim grupama, moj interes za proučavanje funkcioniranja velikih grupa je postao velik i neizbježan. Drugo, živimo u nemirnim

a group regresses in its behaviour and functioning. Individuals begin to experience intense and unpleasant emotions that involve primitive mental mechanisms. These mechanisms serve to protect the individual from psychological fragmentation and breakdown. Then we have, if I may call them so, **true large groups**, which are formed based on ethnic, national or religious affiliation into which individuals are “born” as part of a broader community.

Finally, there are large groups that some refer to as **the masses** (1), which most often form as fan groups and do not have the same characteristics as ethnic, national or religious groups. They lack an established system of functioning and a stable structure. When faced with the threat of external catastrophe, or when such a catastrophe begins, these groups quickly disintegrate and chaos ensues. The chaos often continues even after the external catastrophe has ceased.

On this occasion, I have taken the liberty to reflect in more detail and depth on the so-called “therapeutic large group” and the “true” large groups. The reasons are partially practical and partially personal. First, after more than three decades of professional experience with small groups and occasional participation in therapeutic large groups, my interest in studying the functioning of large groups has become significant and inevitable. Second, we are living in turbulent times when the idea of globalization is quite



vremenima, ideja globalizacije je popri-
lično raširena, a s njom i ideja o brisa-
nju ili mijenjanju postojećih granica,
sve bez adekvatnog razumijevanja što
to zaista znači za susjedne etničke ili
nacionalne ili religijske zajednice.

O značajkama terapijske velike grupe i
mase u ovom članku neću se dalje ba-
viti nego ću pokušati opisati procese u
tkz. "pravoj", velikoj grupi koje možemo
prepoznati u svakodnevnim događa-
njima posebice zadnjih nekoliko go-
dina.

„PRAVA“ VELIKA GRUPA

Kako je već prije rečeno radi se o gru-
pama formiranim po etničkoj, naci-
onalnoj i/ili religijskoj osnovi u kojoj
se postaje član samim rođenjem i koja
sa svojim pravilima, običajima i tradi-
cijom snažno utječe na oblikovanje i
razvoj individualnog (osobnog) iden-
tитета. Što je velika grupa filogenetski
starija i ima ukorijenjena pravila i
običaje koja su prihvaćena od svih ili
velike većine članova možemo govori-
ti o Velikoj grupi koja ima svoj vlastiti
IDENTITET. To je onaj svjesni i ne-
svjesni trajni osjećaj snažne sličnosti
između članova iste velike grupe koji
dijele slične poglede i stavove od zna-
čaja za cijelu zajednicu (veliku grupu).
Osjećaj PRIPADANJA NEKOM je uvi-
jek prisutan i često umirujući, poznat

widespread, along with the notion of
erasing or altering the existing bound-
aries, often without an adequate under-
standing of what this truly means for the
neighbouring ethnic, national or religious
communities.

I will not further address the characteris-
tics of therapeutic large groups or masses
in this article, but I will instead attempt
to describe the processes within the so-
called "true" large group, which we can
observe in everyday events, especially in
recent years.

THE "TRUE" LARGE GROUP

As already mentioned, these are groups
formed on ethnic, national and/or re-
ligious bases, in which one becomes
a member by birth. Such groups, with
their rules, customs and traditions, have
a strong influence on the shaping and
development of individual (personal)
identity. The older a large group is in a
phylogenetic sense, and the more deep-
ly rooted its rules and customs are, the
more we can speak of the Large Group
with its own distinct IDENTITY. This re-
fers to a conscious and unconscious, en-
during sense of strong similarity among
the members of the same large group
who share similar views and attitudes
that are significant to the entire com-
munity (the large group). The feeling of
BELONGING TO SOMEONE is always
present, often soothing and familiar, and
gives a sense of SECURITY (I dare to refer

i ulijeva SIGURNOST (usudim se taj kompleksan osjećaj nazvati bazičnom sigurnosti WE – NESS)

Ključna riječ je sigurnost odnosno osjećaj sigurnosti. Naime, svaka grupa, bilo mala, srednja, terapijska ili prava velika grupa treba imati taj osjećaj sigurnosti da bi mogla normalno funkcionirati i razvijati se. Svaka prijetnja tom osjećaju (realna ili iracionalna) kao i opasnost koja je realno prisutna, narušava taj osjećaj sigurnosti i izaziva razne reakcije članova u nekoj grupi. U maloj grupi počinje reorganizacija i funkcioniranje po principu bazičnih pretpostavki (2). U terapijskoj velikoj grupi, kako je opisano, dolazi do djelomičnog ili potpunog gubitka individualnog identiteta te funkcioniranja u smislu reparacije tog identiteta i stvaranje nečeg novog tj. identiteta velike grupe.

Što se događa u „pravim“ velikim grupama?

U tim skupinama možemo promatrati dvije komponente;

- FUNKCIONIRANJE velike grupe
- STRUKTURU / IDENTITET velike grupe

Polazimo od pretpostavke (činjenice ?) da svaka velika grupa u etničkom, nacionalnom i religijskom aspektu, ima izgrađen svoj identitet velike grupe u

to this complex feeling as a form of basic security: WE-NESS).

The key word here is security, or more precisely, the sense of security. Every group, whether small, median, therapeutic, or a true large group, must have this sense of security in order to function and develop normally. Any threat to that sense (real or irrational), as well as any danger that is actually present, disrupts that sense of security and provokes various reactions among the group members. In a small group, this leads to a reorganization and functioning according to the principle of basic assumptions (2). In a therapeutic large group, as previously described, this often results in a partial or complete loss of individual identity, and functioning aimed at repairing that identity and creating something new, i.e. the identity of the large group.

What happens in “true” large groups?

In these groups, we can observe two main components:

- The FUNCTIONING of the large group
- The STRUCTURE / IDENTITY of the large group

We start with the assumption (or fact?) that every large group, whether ethnic, national or religious, has developed its own large group identity at the centre of which is a LEADER or LEADERSHIP, while all members of the group have a more or less defined INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY. Un-



čijem središtu je VOĐA ili VODSTVO a svi članovi te grupe imaju izgrađen kakav, takav vlastiti INDIVIDUALNI IDENTITET. Osnovne funkcije u stabilnim uvjetima su održavanje integriteta veliko grupnog identiteta i interakcije između vodstva i pojedinaca iz te skupine. Ove interakcije možemo gledati strogo psihoanalitički i svrstati ih kao odnos djeteta (djece) sa idealiziranim ocem (3) ili sa hraniteljicom majkom (1), ili kao veliko grupno analitički a to je održavanje i zaštita identiteta velike grupe. U takvim stabilnim uvjetima svaki pojedinac, član takve grupe, razvija svoj individualni identitet u tihom suradnji sa identitetom velike grupe. Tog, veliko grupnog identiteta, individualni članovi uglavnom NISU svjesni sve dok je situacija u velikoj grupi stabilna. Kad osjetimo promjenu stabilnosti i stabilno postane NESTABILNO, funkcioniranje članova velike grupe se bitno mijenja. Članovi velike grupe postaju preokupirani (i opsjednuti) sa identitetom velike grupe i briga za individualni identitet pada u drugi plan. U tom načinu funkcioniranja i brige za veliku grupu mnogi su spremni štošta učiniti da stabiliziraju, repariraju, održe i zaštite identitet velike grupe. Česta je pojava da, kad je identitet velike grupe oštećen, činimo velike napore da se „zalijepimo“ sa svojim individualnim identitetom na njega. Isto tako u napo-

der stable conditions, the primary functions are to maintain the integrity of the large group identity and to sustain interactions between the leadership and the individuals within the group. These interactions can be viewed strictly through a psychoanalytic lens, and classified as the relationship of a child (children) with an idealised father (3) or with a nurturing mother (1), or through the perspective of large-group analysis as the preservation and protection of the large group identity. In such stable conditions, each member of the group develops their own individual identity in silent collaboration with the identity of the large group. The individual members are generally NOT aware of this large group identity as long as the situation within group remains stable. When we begin to feel a shift in this stability, i.e. when stable becomes UNSTABLE, the functioning of large group members changes significantly. The members of the large group become preoccupied (even obsessed) with the large group identity, and concern for individual identity falls into the background. In this mode of functioning and driven by concern for the group, many are willing to go to great lengths to stabilise, repair, maintain, and protect the identity of the large group. It is common, when the large group identity is damaged, for individuals to make great efforts to “fuse” their individual identity with that of the group. Likewise, in the effort to defend the group identity, people begin to tolerate actions by certain individual members that fall outside the norms and are grounded in

pe počinjemo tolerirati akcije nekih individualnih članova velike grupe koje su mimo uobičajenih mehanizama i korijene vuku u sadizmu i mazohizmu pojedinaca. Ako to i dalje toleriramo i ne sankcioniramo u samom početku, velike su šanse da se takve akcije prošire i prodube do NASILJA nad „drugima“ i drugačijima.

Kako se velika grupa sastoji od individualnih članova neizbježno je da se identitet individualaca zrcali i u identitetu velike grupe. No kad se proces zaštite identiteta velike grupe pokrene, uspostavlja se kao smostalni entitet unutar šire socijalne zajednice. To je obično dosta izražen proces u situacijama realnog „oštećenja“ identiteta velike grupe i gubitka nekog dijela istoga. Kao što i članovi te grupe žaluju za izgubljenim i velika grupa žaluje kao cjelina unutar šire socijalne zajednice. ŽALOVANJE može imati uobičajen psihološki i psihobiološki tijek koji završava sa prihvaćanjem gubitka. No, uvijek će biti i onih koji se sa gubitkom nekoga ili nečega ne mogu pomiriti i funkcioniraju tako da negiraju gubitak i da „OŽIVLJAVAJU“ svoju veličinu kroz tzv. VELIKE IDEJE. Tim procesom se služe političke vođe koje svjesno koriste i manipuliraju ljudima da ih zaslijepe sa idejama veličine i snage identiteta njihove velike grupe. U tu svrhu koriste se tzv. MARKERI IDENTITETA velike grupe, koji se onda

sadism and masochism of individuals. If such behaviours are continuously tolerated and not sanctioned from the very beginning, there is a great chance that they will spread and deepen, ultimately leading to VIOLENCE against the “others” and those who are different.

Since the large group is made up of individual members, it is inevitable that the identity of individuals is mirrored in the identity of the large group. However, once the process of protecting the large group identity is set in motion, it begins to operate as an independent entity within the broader social community. This is usually quite a pronounced process in situations where there has been a real “damage” to the large group identity, and a loss of its part. Just as each individual member mourns what has been lost, the large group also mourns as a collective within a wider social community. This GRIEVING can follow a usual psychological and psychobiological course, ultimately resulting in acceptance of the loss. However, there will always be those who cannot come to terms with the loss of someone or something, and they function by denying the loss and “REVIVING” their group’s greatness through so-called GREAT IDEAS. This process is often exploited by political leaders, who consciously use and manipulate people by blinding them with ideas of greatness and the strength of their large group identity. In order to achieve this, they make use of the so-called large-group IDENTITY MARKERS, which are then put “under the spotlight



„stave pod reflektore javnosti“ (velike grupe), uključe se svi raspoloživi reflektori koji će biti upereni u određeni marker identiteta te velike grupe. Osnovna funkcija tog osvjetljenja markera jest umiriti članove velike grupe i dokazati i pokazati svima da je identitet te velike grupe „živ i zdrav“. E, da bi se to postiglo i sam marker mora biti respektabilan i snažan, nešto što „dira u srce“ većinu članova te određene velike grupe. Takav marker mora biti pažljivo odabran i obično se bira nešto iz prošlosti tog naroda nešto što u većini članstva može izazvati pijetet i usudim se reći, romantične osjećaje. Takav specifičan marker nazivamo IZABRANA TRAUMA / SLAVA (4). Izabrana trauma je, dakle, u stvari zajednička mentalna reprezentacija izabranog događaja iz zajedničke prošlosti velike grupe u kojem je ta grupa preživjela katastrofični, stahoviti gubitak, doživjela veliko poniženje i bespomoćnost od strane vanjskog neprijatelja i može se doživjeti kao žrtva. Takvo stanje u velikoj grupi onemogućuje uobičajeno normalno individualno žalovanje i proradu poniženja i bespomoćnosti članova velike grupe. Takva trauma je kobna i za veliko grupni identitet i za individualni osobni identitet svakog pojedinog člana koji je doživio takvu traumu (osobni identitet se pretvori u OŠTEĆENI osobni identitet). Zrcaljenje individualnog i veliko grupnog identi-

of public attention" (the large group), with all the available lights aimed at a particular marker of that large group's identity. The main function of highlighting such a marker is to soothe the members of the large group and to prove and demonstrate to everyone that the identity of their large group is still "alive and well." However, in order to achieve that effect, the marker itself must be respectable and powerful, something that "touches the heart" of the majority of the members in that particular large group. Such a marker must be carefully selected, and it is usually something from the nation's past, something that can evoke reverence and, I dare say, romantic feelings in the majority of its members. This specific type of marker is known as CHOSEN TRAUMA / GLORY (4). The chosen trauma is, therefore, a shared mental representation of a selected event from the common history of the large group, in which the group experienced a catastrophic, horrific loss, suffered deep humiliation and helplessness at the hands of an external enemy, and came to see itself as a victim. Such a state within the large group prevents normal, individual mourning and processing of the humiliation and helplessness felt by its members. This kind of trauma is devastating not only to the identity of the large group, but also to the personal identity of each individual member who has experienced such trauma (transforming that identity into a DAMAGED personal identity). The mirroring between individual and large-group identity under these circumstances becomes malignant, and the

teta u takvom stanju je maligno i jedino moguće rješenje je PRIJENOS TRAUME i OŠTEĆENOG VELIKO GRUPNOG IDENTITETA na svoje POTOMSTVO (TRANSGENERACIJSKI PRIJENOS). Uz traumu na potomstvo se prenose i izvorni originalni zadaci kojima se neuspješno pokušava naći put ka sanaciji ogromnog oštećenja i grupnog i individualnog identiteta. Kako prolaze godine, dekade, generacije, prijenos tih sadržaja se modificira iz generacije u generaciju ali u svim tim prijenosima je zajednički, sada već povijesni, događaj koji se dogodio nekad davno a tijekom vremena je modificiran i mistificiran. Zbog transgeneracijskog prijenosa taj mentalizirani povijesni događaj ima utjecaj na sve nove generacije te određene velike grupe koja je nekad bila žrtva. Zbog tako velikog i transgeneracijskog utjecaja nekog povijesnog događaja (traume), ti događaji postaju MARKERI IDENTITETA VELIKE GRUPE. Da zaključim, reaktivacijom ovakvih markera i izabranih trauma postiže se mobilizacija članstva u velikoj grupi jer ih sjećanje i transgeneracijski prijenos snažno povezuje. Dakako da neki vođe i političko vodstvo velikih grupa to upotrebljavaju i zloupotrebljavaju za pokretanje masovnih gibanja i pokreta što je uglavnom popraćeno sa novim traumama. Tada ti markeri postaju oruđe u rukama manipulatora koji koriste marker za svoje ciljeve koji su uglav-

only solution appears to be the TRANSMISSION OF TRAUMA and the DAMAGED LARGE-GROUP IDENTITY to the DESCENDANTS (TRANSGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION). Along with the trauma, the original unresolved tasks are also passed down to the descendants, unsuccessfully attempting to find a way to heal the massive injury to both the group and individual identities. As years, decades and generations go by, the transmission of this content gets modified from generation to generation, but in all these transfers, this already historical event that happened a long time ago remains common, and it has become mythologised and mystified over time. Due to the transgenerational transmission, this mentalised historical event continues to influence every new generation of the specific large group that once suffered as a victim. Due to the significant and transgenerational impact of such a historical event (trauma), these events become MARKERS OF LARGE-GROUP IDENTITY. In conclusion, reactivating such markers and chosen traumas results in the mobilization of the large group members, because memory and transgenerational transmission bind them together in a powerful way. Naturally, some leaders and political elites of large groups use and abuse these processes to create mass movements and uprisings, which are usually accompanied by new traumas. At that point, these markers become tools in the hands of manipulators, who exploit them to serve their own goals, which are mainly destructive. I must emphasise



nom destruktivni. Moram napomenuti da za ovakve markere i oruđa koji „pripadaju“ isključivo identitetu velike grupe nemamo pravo protu oruđe kojim bi se uspješno borili protiv destrukcije koju mogu izazvati. Jedino oružje protiv zloupotrebe markera je prevencija, odnosno, bolje razumijevanje i uvid u psihologijske aspekte velikogrupalnih procesa.

REGRESIJA U VELIKOJ GRUPI

Jedan od češćih procesa je REGRESIJA velike grupe (4) ili INKOEZIJA velike grupe (5). Događa se u trenutku napada na identitet velike grupe, a sastoji se od procesa kojima se pokušava održati, zaštititi, i obnoviti identitet velike grupe.

Iako svaka etnička, nacionalna, religijska velika grupa ima svoje specifičnosti i razne oblike funkcioniranja i u progresu, tako i u regresiji, mogu se izdvojiti 2 glavna, opća znaka regresije koja možemo smatrati zajedničkim za sve velike grupe:

1. OKUPLJANJE OKO VOĐE – prvi koji je to opisao bio je Freud koji je to naznačio kao pojavu u grupama bez detaljiziranja da bi to mogao biti znak regresije jedne veće grupe. Dogodi se da članovi velike grupe ostanu okupljeni oko vođe i decenijama. Možemo reći da je to dijelom regresija u službi progressa.

that for such markers and tools which “belong” exclusively to the identity of the large group, we have no real counter-tool which we could use to successfully combat the destruction that they are capable of unleashing. The only weapon against the abuse of these markers is prevention, that is, a deeper understanding of and insight into the psychological aspects of large-group processes.

REGRESSION IN LARGE GROUPS

One of the more common processes is large group REGRESSION (4) or INCOHESSION (5). It occurs at the moment when the identity of the large group is under attack, and consists of processes aimed at preserving, protecting and renewing the large group identity.

Although every ethnic, national or religious large group has its own specific characteristics and functioning modalities, both in progression and regression, there are two main, general signs of regression that can be considered common for all large groups:

1. RALLYING AROUND A LEADER – The first person to describe this was Freud, who observed this phenomenon in groups, although he did not elaborate on it as a specific symptom of regression in large groups. It can happen that large group members remain rallied around the leader for decades. This may partly be understood as regression in the service

Naime, kad su članovi grupe toliko dugo regresivni uglavnom žele da MODIFICIRAJU neke postojeće karakteristike i funkcije u velikoj grupi u cilju očuvanja i obnove identiteta velike grupe. Druga mogućnost okupljanja oko vođe dugo vremena nastaje u totalitarnim režimima iz straha (bolje imati individualnu sigurnost, nego biti kažnjen ili izopćen). Dakle, slijepo vjeruju i slijede vođu (totalitarni objekt) kojeg nesvjesno internaliziraju s čime se odriču nekih (ili čak mnogih) aspekata svojeg individualnog identiteta. Sve ovo nabrojano ne bi se moglo ostvariti bez „adekvatnog“ vođe i njegove individualne organizacije osobnosti. Ukratko, prijetnja sigurnosti velikoj grupi (ili napad na granice velike grupe) + regresija + prikladan vođa koji manipulira sa povijesnim markerima i usijava atmosferu + okupljanje oko vođe + oslobađanje masivne nakupljene frustracije i bijesa te agresije = RAT i DESTRUKCIJA DO ISTREBLJENJA (ako treba).

2. RASCJEP (SPLITTING) - susrećemo se sa dva tipa s rascjepa

a) Rascjep na MI – ONI. To je vrlo snažan rascjep gdje su ONI apsolutni negativci a MI smo apsolutni pozitivci. Grupa se rascjepkuje u odnosu na neku vanjsku grupu ili na dio svoje

of progression. Namely, when group members remain in a regressed state over a long period, they generally aim to MODIFY some of the existing traits and functions of the large group in order to preserve and renew its identity. Another possibility, particularly under totalitarian regimes, is that such long-term rallying around a leader arises from fear (it is better to have individual safety, than to risk punishment or exclusion). People therefore blindly trust and follow the leader (a totalitarian object), whom they unconsciously internalise, thereby sacrificing some (or even many) aspects of their individual identity. All of this could not occur without a “suitable” leader, whose individual personality structure makes such dynamics possible. In short, a threat to large group safety (or an attack on its boundaries) + regression + suitable leader who manipulates historical identity markers and inflames the situation + group cohesion around the leader + release of massive, accumulated frustration, rage and aggression = WAR and DESTRUCTION UNTIL EXTERMINATION (if that is what it takes).

2. SPLITTING – there are two types of splitting:

a) WE – THEY splitting. This is a powerful splitting, where THEY are the absolute villains, and WE are the good guys. The group splits itself in relation to some external group, or in relation to an internal, usually minor part of the



grupe, obično manjinski i po nekoj značajki drugačiji.

- b) Rascjep unutar jedne velike grupe (može se nazvati unutarnji rascjep) kada vođa ne može održati i podržati nadu u humanija i miroljubiva rješenja te smiriti tenzije i pripitomiti zajedničku frustraciju strah i agresiju. Isto tako vođa ne uspijeva odvojiti realnu opasnost od fantazijske opasnosti a to samo pojačava frustraciju i strahove koje bi trebalo smiriti ili pripitomiti.
3. MAGIČNO MIŠLJENJE – koje se očituje u *masivnim introjkcijama* kad gutamo sve informacije i dezinformacije bez kritičnog zdravorazumskog pogleda, i u *masivnim projekcijama* u kojima apsolutno negativno gledamo na drugu stranu i dajemo i vidimo u njima i njihove i svoje negativne karakteristike. Opet, bez ikakvog kritičkog i realnog razmišljanja.

U takvom regresivnom stanju gotovo do psihotičnosti, održivost granica koje su bile ucrtane prije opasnosti i prijetnje, postaju izuzetno važne kao znak da još postojimo i svi članovi velike grupe su preokupirani sa obranom tih granica. Vanjske granice se introjiciraju i snažno psihologiziraju (6). U slučaju stvarne opasnosti i prijetnje izvana (najčešće od susjedne velike grupe,

group that differs by some crucial characteristic.

- b) Splitting within the large group (also called "internal splitting") occurs when the leader fails to maintain hope for a more humane and peaceful resolution, and to calm tensions and contain common frustration, fear and aggression. Moreover, the leader fails to differentiate between real threats and the fantasised ones, which only intensifies the group's anxiety and fear, feelings that ought to be soothed or contained.
3. MAGICAL THINKING – which is manifested through *massive introjections* where we absorb all the information and disinformation without any critical or common-sense evaluation, and through *massive projections*, where we see the opposing side only in absolutely negative terms, while projecting both their and our own negative qualities onto them. Again, this is done without any form of critical or realistic thinking.

In such a regressive state, verging on psychotic, the boundaries that were drawn before the danger and threat become extremely important as a sign that we still exist, and all members of the large group become preoccupied with the defence of those boundaries. The external boundaries are introjected and strongly psychologised (6). In the case of a real external danger or threat (most often from a neighbouring large group, now

sada neprijateljske) jako se daje značaj i važnost u očuvanju tih granica. Male razlike između takvih skupina odjednom postaju izuzetno velike i svaka strana se trudi da ih istakne i očuva nepromijenjenima. Isto tako kad je velika grupa u stanje regresije, oživljavaju se stari i noviji sociokulturni procesi i običaji koji imaju za cilj pokazati (a možda i dokazati) da ta etnička, nacionalna, religijska velika skupina živi i da identitet te velike grupe preživljava. Također, oživljavanje i prakticiranje tih sociokulturnih običaja na neki način olakšava, smanjuje prisutnu zajedničku frustraciju, strah i agresiju. Njihov učinak na patološko i komplicirano žalovanje koje je tada izraženo, može biti umirujuće i lječidbeno.

Nadam se da sam uspio približiti psihološke aspekte i procese kada se dvije ili više velikih grupa nađu u situacijama koje prijete (realno ili fantazirajuće) identitetu bilo koje velike grupe. Zajedničko svim uključenima je REGRESIVNO PONAŠANJE svih, ali na različite načine i do različitih psiholoških nivoa.

ZNACI PROGRESIJE U VELIKOJ GRUPI

Osjećam potrebu da konačno nešto kažem i o ZNAKOVIMA PROGRESIJE u velikim grupama nakon što pro-

considered an enemy), great importance and value is placed on the preservation of those boundaries. Small differences between such groups suddenly become immensely significant, and each side strives to emphasise and preserve them unchanged. Likewise, when the large group is in a regressed state, older and newer sociocultural processes and customs are revived, with the goal of demonstrating (and perhaps even proving) that this ethnic, national or religious large group is alive, and that the identity of the group is surviving. Furthermore, the revival and practice of those sociocultural customs in some way alleviates and reduces the shared frustration, fear and aggression present at the time. Their effect on the pathological and complicated mourning that is expressed in those moments, can be soothing and healing.

I hope I have succeeded in conveying the psychological aspects and processes that occur when two or more large groups find themselves in situations that threaten (either realistically or through fantasy) the identity of any given large group. What is common to all those involved is REGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR, though manifested in different ways and reaching different psychological levels.

SIGNS OF PROGRESSION IN LARGE GROUPS

I feel the need to finally say a few words about the SIGNS OF PROGRESSION in



de realna (rat, devastacija, agresija, strah, uništenje) ili fantazirana opasnost za identitet određene velike skupine. Uopćeno, može se kazati da su znakovi napretka i izlaza iz regresije uspostava stabilnog funkcioniranja civilnog društva gdje individue i profesionalne organizacije stvore kapacitet za kompromise bez oštećenja bilo kojeg i bilo čijeg integriteta i identiteta. Društvo u kojem postoji povećana sloboda govora i u kojem se uspješno zaustavljaju individualni pokušaji zlostavljanja i rušenja individualnog identiteta sa naglaskom na djecu, žene i nemoćne. Tada društvo ili velika grupa može sa iskrenom znatiželjom pokušati RAZUMJETI zašto se neprijateljska velika grupa ponašala kako se već ponašala. Ističem da razumjeti ne znači zaboraviti ili oprostiti ono što se dogodilo. Razumijevanje je složeni proces i zadatak „ humanizacije „ postupaka druge uključene velike grupe i njihovih članova (čak i onih koji su činili najgora zlodjela). Možda čudno zvuči ali takva zlodjela su rezultat regresije velike grupe i pokušaja očuvanja vlastitog veliko grupnog identiteta kroz proces „očišćenja“ koji ide od benignog oblika – očistiti vlastiti rječnik od stranih riječi preko stvaranja novih riječi ili ponovne upotrebe starih arhaičnih, do čišćenja manjina ili druge sub-grupe unutar velike grupe (Židovi

large groups, which manifest after a real (war, devastation, aggression, fear, destruction) or fantasised threat to the identity of a particular large group has passed. In general, it can be said that signs of progression and emergence from regression represent an establishment of stable functioning of a civil society where individuals and professional organizations develop the capacity for compromise without damaging anyone's integrity or identity. It is a society in which there is increased freedom of speech, and where individual attempts to abuse or undermine individual identity are successfully prevented, especially when it comes to children, women and the vulnerable. Only then can a society or large group try to UNDERSTAND, with sincere curiosity, why the hostile large group behaved the way it did. Please note that "to understand" does not mean to forget or to forgive for what happened. Understanding is a complex process and a task that involves "humanizing" the actions of the other involved large group and its members (even those who committed the worst atrocities). It may sound strange, but such atrocities are the result of large-group regression and attempts to preserve their own large-group identity through a process of "cleansing", which ranges from a benign form – such as cleansing their vocabulary of foreign words through creating new words or reviving old archaic ones – all the way to cleansing the minorities or other sub-groups within the

u drugom svj. ratu) do ratnog sukoba sa drugom (najčešće susjednom) velikom grupom.

UMJESTO ZAKLJUČKA

Oprostite na mom idealizmu, ali zaista vjerujem da, kad bi razvili mehanizam razumijevanja drugih velikih grupa, bez da odmah regrediramo, ratova bi bilo puno manje. Drugim riječima, kad bi se mogli suzdržati od osjećaja i želja da napadačima radimo isto ili gore od onoga što je nama napravljeno, i da se zadržimo na racionalnom, logičnom razumijevanju, to bi se moglo postići. Na žalost, povijest nas do sada uči da se sve svodi na „tko je prvi počeo, i sve strane uključene u neki sukob (i napadači i napadnuti) jako brzo postanu jako slični (ili identični). Kako i zašto? Da ukratko ponovim. Prvo, ugrožena i/ ili napadnuta velika grupa, jako brzo ozljeđuje i napada napadača u ime obrane i zaštite identiteta i granica svoje velike grupe. Drugo i jedni i drugi imaju iste ili slične regresivne mehanizme funkcioniranja. Treće vođa ili vodstvo sa obje strane imaju takvu psihičku osobnost koja svjesno ili nesvjesno potiče svoju stranu na sukob. Mučenje, ozljeđivanje, ubijanje postaje društveno opravdano i prihvatljivo. S tim regresija dobije ubrzanje i stvara se začarani krug.

large group (e.g. the Jewish in World War II), and eventually, to waging war with another (usually neighbouring) large group.

INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

Forgive my idealism, but I truly believe that if we developed a mechanism for understanding other large groups without immediately regressing, there would be far fewer wars. In other words, if we could restrain ourselves from the feelings and desires to do the same or worse to the attackers than what was done to us, and if we could keep our rational, logical understanding, this could be achieved. Unfortunately, history has taught us that it all boils down to “who started it”, and all the sides involved in a conflict (both attackers and the attacked) quickly become very similar (or identical). How and why? Let me briefly repeat. First, the threatened and/or attacked large group quickly wounds and attacks the attacker in the name of defending and protecting the identity and the borders of their large group. Second, both sides have the same or similar regressive mechanisms of functioning. Third, the leader or leadership on both sides have a psychological personality that consciously or unconsciously incites their people to conflict. Torture, injury and killing become socially justified and acceptable. With that, regression accelerates and creates a vicious cycle.



LITERATURA/REFERENCES

1. Kernberg, O.F. Mass Psychology through the Analytic Lens', paper presented at 'Through the Looking Glass: Freud's Impact on Contemporary Culture' meeting, Philadelphia, (1989) 23 September. (Unpublished). Google Scholar
2. Bion, R.W. Learning from experience, Jason Aronson Bool, London-New York.(1994)
3. Freud, S. Mass Psychology (Penguin Modern Classics Translated Texts) (2009)
4. Vomik, V. Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity, Group Analysis (March 2001) 34(1):79-97. DOI:10.1177/05333160122077730
5. Hopper, E. "The theory of the basic assumption of incohesion: Aggregation/Massification or (BA) I:A/M, British Journal of Psychotherapy (April 2009)25(2):214 – 229 DOI:10.1111/j.1752-0118.2009.01116.x
6. Volkan, D.V., Ast, G., Eine Borderline-Therapie: Strukturelle und Objektbeziehungskonflikte in der Psychoanalyse der Borderline-Persönlichkeitsorganisation (Veröffentlichungen Des Max-planck-instituts Fur Geschichte) Paperback ,Vanderhoeck-Ruprecht(1996).