GLOBAL INEQUALITY, INDIVIDUAL TRAUMA – DEVIATION[1]

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Abtract: The end of the 20th century is filled with exceptional dynamic changes in the modern society, caused mostly by the process of globalization involved in every segment of the society. The mix of the globalization processes, the transition as well as the privatization in the post-socialist countries has led to the particular growth of social inequality, manifested through a significantly increased number of poor people. Of course that global changes lead to turbulence in the social system, and they are aimed at the intensification of poverty, the social and economic polarization and the decay of the social cohesion and solidarity. Further on in the paper we will focus on the relationship that is established between poverty and some types of deviations, considering that the person as an individual is used to changes, but every one of us reacts individually to the social trauma. The answer that we are searching for is, if there is a quick and creative way out of these traumas caused by the rapid and unexpected global change, and whether it lies in overcoming of the economic disparities.

Keywords: social trauma, social inequality, modern society, poverty, deviations.

1. Introduction

The perception of the social reality involves a detailed analysis of the same, which means a scientific perception and analysis of the positive as well the negative developments in the society. The negative developments in one part of the society are causing consequences that are manifested in different ways, depending on the way they enter and stay in the subconsciousness. In that context, the fall of the communist social systems led to a specific type of social trauma, if we have in mind the multitude of stories that remain buried not only under the ruins of the Berlin Wall, but also in the ruins caused by the local wars and conflicts, known as new wars, but very familiar and well known from one past time. So we are not only searching for the missing, but also for the local, in the unselfish entering of the global processes, where sometimes we cannot reach for the right solution. In such a state of expectations and encounters the person and the group are facing a social trauma.

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My intention in this paper is to focus all the attention towards the social trauma, the dynamic everyday life, and there is a need to mention the work of some of the most famous social theorists, especially Jeffrey Alexander and Piotr Sztompka in the context of their work on the social and cultural trauma.

We can come to a conclusion that in the last thirty years, the post-socialist societies who are well aware of the socio-economic and political turbulence have faced social trauma caused by the processes of transition and globalization that have contributed to their rapid reformulation. This situation is primarily caused due to the stratification of the population, as well as the overflow of the impoverished middle social layer, as a result of the collapse of the former industrial giants, causing the logical reduction of the number of employees. The rise of unemployment has contributed to a decline in the living standards and the relatively active and socially secured citizen became a victim of impoverishment, while experiencing multiple traumas.

2. Theory of Social Trauma

When speaking of social trauma, sociological theories offer a range of theories through which we can closely perceive the detected phenomena. They also represent the initial base for the proper study of these phenomena, and an opportunity for theoretical upgrades. In the paper I will briefly elaborate Jeffrey Alexander's and Piotr Sztompka's theories of trauma. It should be emphasized that for their better understanding it is necessary to be familiar with the terms used by the authors. In this sense we talk about terms such as: anomy, civilizational incompetence, the mistrust syndrome, collective guilt, a crisis of identity, cultural lag and etc. Jeffery Alexander believes that in each character and trauma theory lies its "naturalness" regardless whether it is related to the moral or the psychological sense. I would immediately remind that there are many similarities between the terms of the national and cultural trauma hence their identification, or reliance on each other in many cases are not surprising,. According to Alexander the term cultural trauma represents a process in which the members of a community feel that they are experiencing a frightening and unpleasant event, that is causing deep traces on the individual as well on the group consciousness, which leads to changing the memory of the community, and its identity, so that is why it leaves a big mark on the group consciousness. His concept is quite understandable and explains clearly that when he speaks of cultural trauma, he also means a type of empirical concept, which by itself is suggesting the establishment of connections, precisely connections between unrelated events and structures, their mutual perception and action. Cultural trauma perceived in this way creates an image of the dimension that is directed not only to social responsibility, but also to political action. There is a specific type of time-distance towards national and cultural trauma and the fact that the members of the community are not capable to obtain the immediate direct experience of the traumatic event, so we often talk about the experiences mediated by information and images which are refreshing our memory. Speaking

of cultural trauma I would like to mention another term which is used by Alexander, the so-called "trauma process". Jeffrey Alexander is using this term in situations where the collective experiences are connected with unusual and major intentions; they are disrupting the normal life, and the crises created by the disquietude is recognizable in the same identity crises. The main role and the responsibility in this process are owned by that group which articulates its meaning, also there is appropriate connection of actions, in terms of the existence of interest and desire for an appropriate interpretation for the population.

Jeffrey Alexander's cultural trauma is perceived as wide open fight with meanings which include two segments such as "identifying the struggle and victim suffering". He speaks of two types of thinking about the term trauma, for "the character of the trauma term". His forms of thinking are primarily driven by the effects of the Holocaust.

What is characteristic of Sztompka is that he refers to the historic change as a social trauma, and divides it in three discourses or periods. In that sense he says: "First, for the whole nineteenth century there prevailed a discourse of progress, accompanying the birth and spread of triumphant modernity (Alexander and Sztompka 1990). Then, sometime in the middle of the twentieth century, we witnessed the decay of the idea of progress (Nisbet 1980) and the ascendance of a discourse of crises." (Holton 1990) Sztompka's intention is to emphasize the use of the word trauma in the social sciences and that is noted in his statements "... we suddenly hear more and more often –in the media, in political speeches, in everyday talk – the strange word 'trauma', no longer confined to hospitals and psychiatric sections. A new discourse is born, the discourse of trauma." (Sztompka 2000:449-450) Sztompka in *The Other Face of Social Change* defines cultural trauma as a cultural defining and an interpreted shock for the cultural affairs of the society, presenting a model of traumatic sequence, describing the typical conditions under which cultural trauma reacts and evolves.

> "The career of the concept of trauma as applied to society begins with the realization that change itself, irrespective of the domain it touches, the groups it affects, and even irrespective of its content, may have adverse effects, bring shocks and wounds to the social and cultural tissue. The focus shifts from the critique of particular types of change, to the disturbing, destructive, shocking effects of change *per se*." (Sztompka 2000:7)

In this sense he is connecting the trauma concept with every social change. Regardless of the nature of the event that takes place, the very cause of changes can cause trauma in part or in the whole population. But speaking of social trauma he is considering the sudden social changes caused by some adverse events that are causing the trauma of the individual and the trauma of the society as a whole.

> "Saying simply that social change produces trauma is a gross simplification. We took as a starting point of the argument the assumption that social life is synonymous with incessant change.

If any change were to produce trauma, it would mean that all societies were permanently and irreparably traumatized. The theory of trauma would lose any empirical meaning and would become purely tautological. It would also carry too pessimistic message running counter to our intuitions which indicate that traumas occur only in some societies, at some moments, that they are weaker or stronger, and that they are not eternal; they appear and go. The sensible approach is to propose that only some types of changes bring about traumas, and therefore that only some societies in some periods of their history become traumatized." (Sztompka 2000:7)

3. Social trauma

The modern society is filled with fast and unexpected changes in the economic, political plan, as well as in the security and technological plan as a result of the world global processes. These exact changes can be "the initial capsule" for negative reactions and consequences, well known in social trauma. The 20th century is full of these kinds of events recognized in the two World Wars that left behind devastation and are reflected through death, the Holocaust, the use of atomic bombs, but also in the image of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall and in recent times the collapse of the socialist countries, the exodus, refugee crises, terrorist attacks, the enormous increase of unemployment, global ecological problems etc., it shows us how big, or small man can be, depending on the interests of his devotion.

Analyzing social trauma, the sociological attention is focused on the collective trauma, which means studying and focusing on at least one group of people. The problem elaborated from this perception, connected to collective trauma, understands the need of theoretical models and concepts, and in that sense, the most noteworthy are Vamik Volkan's "chosen trauma" and Jeffrey Alexander's "sociological concept of cultural trauma." Every traumatic event, once it ends, leaves a huge impact on the individual, the group or the society. Speaking of trauma from a sociological point of view, it is often connected with dramatic events that occurred in the near past.

We are all aware of the fact that trauma as a process is not easy to excel, unless helped by the environment, it can be reflected on a wider scale, especially the socio-economic, cultural, and mostly on the emotional individual plan. For a more precise explanation of the phenomenon of social trauma we will use the definition given by Jeffrey Alexander: "Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity tell they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways." (Alexander 2004:1)

When speaking about the cultural trauma phenomenon, we primarily need to picture an event at some point in the past, associated with adverse events, that causes negative memories in the individual as well in the entire population of the society. From this perspective these can be global natural disasters, events caused by man himself, and depending on the subject of trauma we can talk about a trauma of a group, trauma of many social groups, or trauma of the entire population.

In this context Sztompka is speaking about the changes in the society, which happened as a result of a trauma, pointing at four basic features:

> "First, it is characterized by specific speed. The obvious case is the change which is sudden, rapid, occurs within a span of time relatively short for a given kind of processes. The second trait of traumatogenic change has to do with its scope. It is usually wide, comprehensive. Either in the sense that it touches many aspects of life – be it social life or personal life –or that it affects many actors, and many actions. Third, traumatogenic change is marked by specific content, particular substance. Either in the sense that is radical, deep, fundamental, i.e. touches the core aspects of social life or personal fate, or that it affects universal experiences, whether public or private. The fourth feature of traumatogenic change has to do with the specific mental frame with which it is encountered by the people. It is faced with unbelieving mood, it is at least to some extent unexpected, surprising; precisely 'shocking' in the literal sense of this term." (Sztompka 2000: 8-9)

The period at the beginning of the transition, which is often characterized by the fall of the Berlin Wall, represents in fact the period in which all of the previous socialist countries are facing long economic crisis, which are the main indicator of the lack of perspective for most of the working population as a result of firing the workers, putting them on "forced vacations", bankruptcy proceedings as well as not receiving salary for several months. All this pointed to the "death-bed" of the planned economy of the time, and its departure in history.

The changes that occurred in post-socialist countries in the early nineties of the 20th century have caused a particular kind of social trauma as a result of a huge diversity of internal and external factors, recognizable not only in the change of political systems, but also for the sudden liberalization of the economy, which had opened the Pandora's box of problems associated with the growing rate of unemployment, the inability to adapt fast to the global and transitional processes caused primarily by "the unready individual and the lack of proper structure."

Having in mind that Republic of Macedonia was considered as an economically underdeveloped country, at the beginning of the transition it entered with a "luggage" – a recognizable burden seen in the poor infrastructure, unemployment, poverty occurrence and inadequate education system, which of

course did not have the capacity to produce the workforce required in the global market.

In Macedonia, there is a little part of the transitional process that had underwent through a dramatic part followed by a particular social trauma. Talking about this, the first thing that I have in mind are the refugees from the Kosovo crises, the 2001 conflict, the "suspicious privatization" and the further impoverishment of the population. Exactly there lie the crucial issues such as: the fall of GDP, additional unemployment, large number of initiated bankruptcy proceedings or irregular payment of wages.

The period of transition is basically known for its adverse effects detected in the visibly reduced employment opportunities, the increased occurrences of massive layoffs of the former industrial giants that dramatically influenced the decline in the living standards. Losing a job causes not only stress but also represents a kind of a traumatic act. Firstly, the individual is not aware of that he is being faced with long-term unemployment, and most of the unemployed live with exactly that kind of experience. The unemployment for the individual is a "kind of heart attack" a hit at "normal life" that creates "time-vacuum" and hopelessness. That is why we are talking about trauma that comes suddenly and without notice. The unemployed turns into a "white spot", something that quite quickly turns many into number. Nevertheless, Macedonia has joined the appropriate transformation, characteristic of the nineties of the 20th century, and can be analyzed from different prisms. We can perceive the positive integration of the democratic values and the attitude towards ownership. The negative consequences can be detected in the new wave of job losses, the uncertainty of this category of people and in facing increased poverty. In order to explain the emergence of the most endangered category of people in the transitional period, we will approach the analysis of the unemployment rate.

Table 1. Unemployment rate in the Republic of Macedonia

Year	Unemployment rate
1993	27.7
1994	30.0
1995	35.6
1996	31.9
1997	36.0
1998	34.5
1999	32.4
2000	32.2
2001	30.5
2002	31.9
2003	36.3
2004	37.2
2005	37.3
2006	36.0
2007	34.9
2008	33.8
2009	33.2
2010	32.1
2011	31.4
2012	31.0
2013	29.0
2014	27.9

Source: Bank of the Republic of Macedonia

Starting from the data in Table 1, what is evident is that Republic of Macedonia was struggling with a high unemployment rate even before the transition process that comes with a "huge luggage". The problem of unemployment is a particularly serious social problem that we were facing during the entire transitional process. The highest rate of unemployment of 37.3% was recorded in 2005 and already in the following year there was a visible positive tendency of a decline in the unemployment. The unemployment in 2013 was 29%, with a tendency for a further decrease.

To whom do we owe this progression? Republic of Macedonia went through a difficult period during the transition, but it was also a period when the real challenge was perceived, to attract the gaze of the economically highly developed western countries to invest in the country, and precisely those investments have put the Macedonian economy in motion. Positive results, as a result of this successful economic policy, could be seen in the next period. The positive signals are a result of the realized range of reforms that contribute to a positive business climate and the input of fresh capital. The unemployed and their families are faced with a serious collective trauma, caused by several elements, including the loss of professional identity, the social capital, a decline of the living standards thus getting the identity of a poor layer. In the same

context the unemployed "not by their fault" are brought to the social margins losing the strength to fight the present, and the lack of existential resources frustrates them. In fact, the "overnight" transition did not leave space for adaptation for one part of the population, especially after the privileges lost inherent for the now gone into history "welfare state".

Metaphorically speaking, the transitional period turned into a "rough sea", whose waves ruined many homes, and in whom many people disappeared, and the income of several generations was lost in a short period of time. Here lies the main challenge, how is it possible in this situation and in modified conditions to maintain the living flow, with a barrier that cannot be overcome.

From the analysis of data on poverty in Macedonia, we can notice that when it comes to the annual summary index, it has surged in the 1997-2003 interval, but in the following 2004-2010 interval some variation of the poverty summary index exists, with the highest measured value of 31.1% in 2009. Poverty is present in Macedonia, and we should talk openly about it.

People were poor before the transition, after it they became poorer, they were joined by the impoverished middle layer. It is understandable that most of the income is spent on basic needs. The lack of funds for "days of crisis" is causing stress and trauma especially for people who were used to support themselves by their own labor in the previous system. The uncertainty of consistency in the workplace and the variability of the same, can cause an attack on the individual, who is exploring the opportunities for additional funds, consciously or unconsciously involving himself in the net of the underground economy, and reasonably falling into further accidents.

Table 2. Annual index of poverty in Republic of Macedonia

Year	Annual Summary Index	Depth of poverty index
1997	19.0	4.6
1998	20.7	5.1
1999	21.0	5.7
2000	22.3	6.0
2001	22.7	5.4
2002	30.2	9.3
2003	30.2	9.4
2004	29.6	9.4
2005	30.0	9.7
2006	29.8	9.9
2007	29.4	9.7
2008	28.7	9.2
2009	31.1	10.1
2010	30.9	10.9

Source: Bank of the Republic of Macedonia

Every society, regardless of its development, has faced the problem of deviant and criminal behavior by some of its citizens. Theories present various thesis related to the reasons for its appearance, but there is one thesis which is most widespread and is related to the lack of social commitment of the individual and having too much free time, which can lead to a deviant behavior. But the same thesis can be set in reverse, which means that deviant behavior increases the possibility of unemployment and poor economic status. Each unemployed will not become a delinquent, but may become, and usually that is the one who is blaming society for his failures and not himself.

We wonder what exactly is deviation, deviant behavior. In this context I would quote Mihailo Djuric, according to which "the deviant behavior represents every human activity, no matter whether it appears as action, taking the position or opinion, located at or below the allowed average deviation from the general norms, and if visible causes spontaneous or organized social disapproval" (Sulejmanov and Stojanovski 2002:127).

Deviant behavior manifests itself in many forms, such as: prostitution, gambling, violence, suicide and alike.

The attention in the paper is directed towards suicides as one form of sociopathological and deviant occurrences, a problem present in Macedonia. Having in mind the theme of the social trauma, perhaps closest to the same topic is the problem of suicides. The global movements and the pursuit of higher growth contributed to the feeling of fulfillment of the person, showing his creativity. The less a person dwells on existential issues, self-harm and suicide are far away from the human subconscious. But economic problems are not always the key issue, having in mind that the average and well economically developed countries are facing a high rate of suicides such as: France, Sweden, Denmark etc. There is interesting data that indicates high suicide rate for many of the post-socialist countries, especially almost all the countries of the Former Soviet Union, primarily Lithuania and Estonia. Traditionally high suicide rates are recorded in Hungary, Slovenia and parts of Serbia (Vojvodina).

The phenomenon of suicide is present in all societies, and the main feature is the negative attitude towards it in all civilizations. Suicide is a deviant phenomenon, which presents a social problem by itself and requires a serious approach to its prevention. This phenomenon is a concern to many social sciences, that is why we are not surprised by the great number of definitions. In this sense I would mention a few examples of the treatment of suicide throughout history. Plinius perceived suicide as a privilege of the man that is praising the person above the Gods, which they cannot do. The Eskimos find the suicide, especially of elderly people, as a duty, so that would not be considered a burden on the community, while the ancient society condemned it.

From a sociological perspective, suicide is defined as a socially pathological phenomenon. Durkheim establishes mutual relationship between suicide and social factors, which is in correlation with certain conditions of the social environment. In fact, we are speaking of a social phenomenon that is

processed separately in his book *Suicide*, where a typology of suicides is elaborated: egoistic, altruistic, and anomic. Each occurrence needs a mix of adverse circumstances, which at some point are the main ones for rejection of one's life. Usually the motive lies in the socio-economic status, often associated with unemployment and in the accompanying phenomena arising from it, and the individual and the society could not find a way out.

Having in mind the statistical data, Macedonia is a country with a low rate of suicides. I would not like to get too much into the etiology of the problem, especially when this subject is much closer to psychology, law and forensic medicine, however I will analyze the problem from a sociological perspective. The reason for such an aggressive behavior could be found in the difficult economic and social situation of the person, which at some point is brought into a state of depression followed by hopelessness. Despite the low rate of suicides in Macedonia, what deserves attention is the fact that the highest percentage of suicides belongs to the oldest category, and it descends to the adult working capable population. This represents an indicator that the young population often commits suicides for no particular reason. According to the gender, the male population is the one that dominates, according to the nationality, Macedonian nationality is the dominant; the most common place of execution is the urban environment, the cities.

Suicide is a negative social phenomenon and an act of a man who is consciously and deliberately ruining his life, a form of human responding to the external and internal conflicts, but in some cases it is a psychopathological reaction, related to the mental health of the person, as well from psychological crisis and calculations. It is evident that more attention is being paid to the social processes, particularly emphasizing the rapid urbanization, accompanied by internal migration, which is able to trigger a "short circuit" of frustration and inability to adapt quickly. The impossibility of extending the habits in our life and the clumsiness in the new cultural environment could be related to the growth of suicide that can be seen globally. Gibbs has a quite interesting opinion that sociologists are pointing their attention to this phenomenon with an intention to detect the social factors and social influences that lead to the desperate act of suicide. "Sociology should prove how big the importance of the social impact in the suicide act is ... maybe it should object to society that it is not participating enough in the prevention of suicide, which should be seriously considered" (Arnaudovski 1983: 46).

It is visible that a person who is conditionally marginalized in the society, and distant from his group is more endangered by suicide, but what matters is the mutual functioning of the society. For a person to take its life requires a set of motives, and one of them is the key trigger.

"Suicide is a deeply intimate, personal and individual act, but at the same time in its essence is a social phenomenon, because it is a consequence of the disturbed relationship between the individual and society and its definition should consider both elements" (Sulejmanov and Stojanovski 2002: 288).

We will briefly analyze the movement of suicides in Macedonia for a period of two decades, spanning the transitional process.

Table 3. Deaths from suicide in Republic of Macedonia 1994-2013

Years	Suicides
1994	128
1995	130
1996	143
1997	155
1998	151
1999	169
2000	148
2001	151
2002	149
2003	136
2004	179
2005	143
2006	165
2007	169
2008	161
2009	167
2010	122
2011	128
2012	172
2013	170

Source: State Statistics Office of the Republic of Macedonia

From the data in Table 3 we can note that Macedonia is among the countries with low rates by the number of suicides, a tendency that is present for almost thirty years. It is characteristic that large oscillations do not appear, the number of suicides in 2004 is 170 and in 2013 is 179. There is a slight increase that could be connected with the increasing rate of unemployment, a result of the transition and privatization as well as the fall of the living standards. A certain increase in suicides occurred in 2004. The analysis notes that suicides in Macedonia range between 122 and 179. Despite the increase in the number of suicides, our country has a lower limit in European terms, unlike our neighbors. The most serious is the fact that suicide is often performed by young people, a problem which Bulgaria has been facing. The problem of suicide opens a variety of other issues and deserves a serious research, related to the phenomenon that a growing number of young people in the world are choosing suicide. We should consider the fact that in the Western countries there is an increase of the percentage of young people that commit suicide and a decrease of the percentage or the suicidal rate of the oldest population. So, in the near future, our society could be faced with the same phenomenon, considering the negative moments that youth has been experiencing.

4. Conclusion

The globalization process owns the power of entering into every pore of the social living. But despite the positive moments, the process by itself represents the initial capsule for causing a range of conflict situations at the economic and cultural plan, leaving the individual in a position of inferiority, losing their identity, or at least noticing the possibility of hybridization. Perhaps the inappropriate use of the Washington Consensus, the sudden liberalization and the measures of the tight belt, led to a position of social trauma. It is true that the physical boundaries are no longer a problem, but coping with the rapid changes of the technological inventions may be a problem if you have in mind the professional staff, and all is reduced to the data with continuous improvement. Then again the modern urban living becomes a necessity.

However, we cannot change anything overnight, especially when it comes to lifestyle. Economic development and poor infrastructure represent a scar of poverty and social isolation. But not everybody achieves in finding themselves in the urban space, there are individuals who are leading towards the center, and others whose predisposition left them on the margins, creating possibilities for deviant behavior. appropriate for the unsociable individuals who express themselves through deviations.

Although social deviation is present in all societies, both developed and undeveloped, it is a fact that some deviant behaviors are more common in the countries with lower social standards. In this context, the societies with high level of poverty and unemployment can expect an increased deviant activity related particularly to violent offences, alcoholism, prostitution, and in some cases suicide.

Therefore, we need to find an appropriate way to overcome social trauma and deviant situations, so that the citizen of the modern society, the citizen of the global village would be productive and personally satisfied beyond the marginalization and segregation process. Globalization has precisely this purpose, and we can see the right opportunity to hold the pace of development in the educational changes.

Without changes in the education we are facing with "outdated and unattractive professions", the key indicator of trauma and are developing the feeling of outsiders.

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ГЛОБАЛНА НЕЕДНАКВОСТ, ИНДИВИДУАЛНА ТРАУМА – ДЕВИЈАЦИЈА

Драган СТЕФАНОВСКИ

Айсйракй: Крајот на XX век е исполнет со исклучителни динамични промени во современото општество, предизвикани главно од процесот на глобализација инволвиран во секој сегмент на општеството. Мешањето на процесите на глобализација, транзицијата, како и приватизацијата во постсоцијалистичките земји доведе до значителен пораст на општествената нееднаквост, манифестирана преку значително зголемениот број сиромашни луѓе. Се разбира дека глобалните промени водат кон турбуленции на општествениот систем и дека се насочени кон интензификација на сиромаштијата, општествената и економската поларизација и распад на општествената кохезија и солидарноста. Во натамошниот дел од текстот ќе се фокусираме на врската помеѓу сиромаштијата и одредени типови девијации, имајќи предвид дека поединецот како индивидуа е навикнат на промени, но секој од нас различно реагира на општествената траума. Одговорот што го бараме е, дали постои брз и креативен начин за надминување на овие трауми предизвикани од брзите и неочекувани глобални промени и дали тој лежи во надминувањето на економските разлики.

Клучни зборови: општествена траума, општествена нееднаквост, модерно општество, сиромаштија, девијации.