



KOLLEKTIEWE TRAUMA: 'N REIS VANUIT ISOLASIE &
VERWYDERING NA TUISKOMS & KONNEKSIE

Sessie 4: 6 Mei (Wilhelm Verwoerd)

‘n Diep, donker tuiskoms?

‘n Profetiese oproep tot die pastorale verwerking van ons
‘oortreder’ en ‘kulturele’ trauma

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'n Voorbeeld uit die Noord-Ierse konflik: Alistair Little se 'dieper, donker' reis van vermensliking

My experience has been of two different journeys. It's the journey of having contact with your enemy but having a relationship that's very practical and maybe political about change and getting things done. And then for me there is a journey that's not better, but deeper, in terms of getting to know someone who was your enemy as a human being... their hopes, their dreams, their aspirations. In some sense, for me that has been more difficult and more painful because **when I have started to encounter people who were my enemy as fully human as I am, it allowed me to see darkness in myself that's not comfortable to sit with. It allowed me to see my prejudices...my wrongdoing as a human being.**

The personal relationships that I have developed with a number of different republican combatants or prisoners have allowed me to take more responsibility and to be more aware of what my actions actually did to other human beings, what it left families with. **Everything about me wants to run away from that, because it's much more emotionally and psychologically painful to do that.** (Beyond Dehumanisation project, May 2014)

'Oortreder' trauma & 'morele verwonding' (moral injury)

'Perpetrator trauma' refers to the idea that the **action of a 'perpetrator' 'causes a psychological injury to the perpetrator, which can result in adverse physical, social, or emotional consequences'** (Mohamed 2015:1162 in Karam 2019:74).

There is a growing recognition that soldiers and more broadly combatants (armed parties to a conflict) can also suffer from 'moral injury', i.e. **'the violation, by oneself or another, of a personally embedded moral code or value resulting in deep injury to the psyche or soul. It is what used to be called sin'** (Meagher 2014, xvi-xvii).

Typical war-related moral injuries include the witnessing of or being involved in the killing of children and women, even if the soldier believes in the 'rightness' of his side's overall cause.

SESSIE 4 GROEP GESPREK

- Herken ons iets van 'n Alistair Little of 'n 'Tertius Coetzee' (*Forgiveness*) se 'dieper, donker binnereis' in ons self en/of ons gemeentelede?
- Hoe resoneer ons met die 'diagnose' van Amerikaanse veterane se 'morele verwonding'?

‘Kulturele trauma’ as ‘n **gedeelde** dieper, donker binnereis?

‘[It is] ‘traumatic’ for a community ‘to recognize that its members, instead of being heroes, have been perpetrators who violated the cultural premises of their own identity’ (Giesen 2004: 114 in Karam 2019)

‘[C]ultural trauma’ is constructed when a ‘national society’ ‘not only identify the existence and source of human suffering but “take on board” some significant responsibility for it’ (Alexander 2004: 1), resulting in ‘acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity’s sense of its own identity’ (2004: 10).

‘n Profetiese oproep tot ware tuiskoms?

Die uiters ongemaklike erkenning van ons retrospektiewe aandadigheid/medepligtigheid is ‘n vorm van kollektiewe trauma.

Die moeisame verwerking van hierdie kollektiewe trauma is egter ‘n noodsaaklike stap ter aanvaarding van gedeelde historiese verantwoordelikheid.

Sonder hierdie ‘dieper, donker’ verwerking is volhoubare versoening nie moontlik is nie.

Ontvlugting van 'kulturele trauma', weghardloop van retrospektiewe kollektiewe aandadigheid

Soos individuele oortreders is 'implicated' groepe/organisasies ook geneig om weg te hardloop van gedeelde historiese verantwoordelikheid.

Vgl Tsutsui (2009) se raamwerk van tipiese verdedigingsmeganismes (bv. Japan na 2de Wêreldoorlog):

- **Denial:** we did not do (any) wrong, exclusive focus on our heroic deeds
- **Justification:** violations took place, but in self-defence; 'necessary evil for the greater good'
- **Evasion:** focus on our victimhood – look at what they have done to us
- **Projection:** blame a few 'bad apples' vs questioning our collective, core identity
- **Displacement:** outward evasion – what they did was worse

SESSIE 4 GROEP GESPREK

- Hoe 're-formeer' ons ons menslike geneigdheid om weg te hardloop van ons aandeel in historiese lyding, spesifiek as leiers/lidmate van die NGK?

Joernaalinskrywings

Sessie 4

Die erkenning en verwerking van ons 'kulturele trauma' is 'n 'dieper, donker' reis, maar noodsaaklik vir ware tuiskoms in Suid-Afrika, in ons menswees, in ons Christenskap...

Wat het ons nodig om saam op hierdie 'dieper, donker' tuiskomsreis in ons konteks en spesifiek in die NGK te gaan *en* daarin te volhard?

‘n Paar nuttige bronne

Richard Rohr Daily Meditations, 2-8 Mei, Trauma and Healing, veral ‘The Soul Wound’ (5 Mei)

<https://cac.org/category/daily-meditations/>

Alexander, Jeffrey C. et al, 2004, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Meagher, Robert. 2014. *Killing from the Inside Out: Moral Injury and Just War*. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books.

Karam, Beschara, 2019, ‘The Representation of Perpetrator Trauma in *Forgiveness*’, *Communicatio*, 45:1, 71-86

Tsutsui, K. 2009. ‘The Trajectory of perpetrators’ trauma: mnemonic politics around the Asia-Pacific War in Japan’, *Social Forces* 87, 3: 1389–422.