

REVIEW ARTICLE

MENTAL HEALTH AFTER TRAUMA: INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE DIMENSIONS

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ABSTRACT

The aim: The article is devoted to uncovering the essence of the trauma, identifying the cause of its formation, and investigating the consequences for the person and the community.

Materials and methods: The methodological basis of the given study is the interdisciplinary and hermeneutic approach, which was used in combination with the methods of retrospective, analysis, synthesis, and extrapolation, as well as the methodological apparatus of memory studies with its inherent intention of the problem of group identity formation. A prominent place in the process of writing the work played the method of critical literature review. Sources reflecting research on individual and collective dimensions of trauma were found in PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Research articles were found using the keywords "trauma", "traumatic experience", "victim", "violence", "collective trauma", "cultural trauma", "memory", etc.

Conclusions: Modern studies of traumatic experience are inextricably linked with the scientific work of Sigmund Freud, who was one of the first to explicate trauma as a destroyer of "protection". This gave reason to modern researchers to consider it an emotional reaction of the psyche to mental, physical, or cultural violence directed against the identity of an individual or an entire community. Whether inflicted on an individual or a community as a whole, trauma invariably seeks testimony in order to produce meanings and mechanisms capable of preventing violence and preserving the mental health of both the individual and the community as a whole.

KEY WORDS: mental health, trauma, traumatic experience, victim, violence, collective trauma, cultural trauma, identity, memory

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the intellectual discourse has seen an increase in scientific interest in the problem of mental health of an individual and the community in general [1]. This is partly due to the ever-increasing sensitivity of society to the topic of violence and the suffering it causes, on the one hand, and the guilt associated with violence, on the other. Each aspect of the study of violence mentioned by us necessarily brings back the concept of "trauma" into the field of intellectual attention, the study of which is still accompanied by categorical uncertainty and excessive metaphoricality, which, on the one hand, makes the works of researchers of this phenomenon accessible and interesting even to non-professional readers, and on the other hand, significantly complicates the scientific conceptualization of the research subject.

Psychotherapy and psychoanalysis usually identify trauma in people who have experienced social or political violence, natural or man-made disasters, and have not been able to cope with the challenges of radical social changes. Violation of a person's relationship with the world, which manifests itself in the permanent presence of a traumatic experience in the present, according to experts, is caused by the latent presence of trauma in the shadow of human

consciousness [1, p. 279]. After stabilization of memories, this mental experience gives a person (and sometimes the whole society) a narrative matrix of representation of the past and perception of the present. Thanks to this, the trauma can be explained as an author's vision of the past, through the prism of which one can see the coordinates for the formation of the future.

The inseparable unity of the traumatic experience with the memories of a person forms the obsession with catastrophes, upheavals and trials inherent in modern culture. Mass culture appropriates trauma, attracting the audience with a sensational promise to reveal a traumatic story incomprehensible to everyday perception, thereby shaking norms and devaluing existing values. Thanks to this, the traumatic experience, on the one hand, gets the opportunity to find a listening audience and testify about itself; meanwhile, on the other hand, it demonstrates the inability to be reproduced via intersubjective means. This often leads to the trivialization of traumatic experience, which, acquiring a verbal form, at the same time begins to look for ways to be included in the space of collective memory in order to influence the value system and social principles of the future.

By destroying the basic ideas about the world, trauma challenges the understanding of over two centuries of belief in the rationality and meaningfulness of the world. It destabilizes the existing system, thereby opening up the possibility for numerous political manipulations. As a result of this, attempts by politicians to manipulate the traumatic experience of people affected by violence, ensuring the legitimacy of their often violent activities, are becoming extremely popular today, as evidenced by the modern rhetoric of the Russian pro-government elite. In our opinion, they launched an aggressive military campaign in Ukraine for the sake of realizing their own political ambitions, meanwhile, they represent themselves as a defender of the residents of unrecognized republics who suffered from violence.

THE AIM

The article is devoted to uncovering the essence of the trauma, identifying the cause of its formation, and investigating the consequences for the person and the community.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological basis of the study is an interdisciplinary approach in determining the essence, ways and means of overcoming mental health disorders caused by various forms of violence. In view of this, an important role in the research process, on the one hand, played the hermeneutic approach, which was used in combination with the methods of retrospective, analysis, synthesis, and extrapolation; and on the other hand, the methodological apparatus of memory studies with its inherent intention upon the problem of group identity formation. The method of critical literature review played a prominent place in the process of writing the work too. Sources reflecting research on individual and collective dimensions of trauma were found in PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Research articles were found using the keywords “trauma”, “traumatic experience”, “victim”, “violence”, “collective trauma”, “cultural trauma”, etc.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

The study of the phenomenon of mental trauma is inextricably linked with the study of hysteria by Sigmund Freud. In his work “Studies in hysteria” [3], first published in 1893, he focuses on the fact that “any event that causes a feeling of fear, shame, mental pain can have a traumatic effect; and, of course, the probability of whether it will take the form of an injury depends on the receptivity of the victim” [3, p. 9.]. At the same time, the researcher noted that mental trauma or the memory of it acts like a foreign body, which, after penetrating inside, remains an active factor for a long time, which determines the subsequent actions and life of a person. If we compare the process of traumatization with the process of digestion, then a traumatic event is such a massive impact of the environment or stressful

influences that a person is unable to digest, process and integrate them.

A significant achievement of Freud, which was later actively used by trauma researchers, as evidenced by the work of Cathy Caruth “Listening to Trauma: Conversations with Leaders in the Theory and Treatment of Catastrophic Experience” [4], is the discovery that the real source of trauma is not the event itself, and the memory of her. This opinion is quite clearly demonstrated in the work “The Study of Hysteria” using the example of Katarina’s situation. As a child, she suffered from sexual harassment by her uncle, which she realized only after she caught him with another woman. What she saw gave meaning to her own experience of harassment. This, in turn, indicates that the traumatic impact on the girl was not caused by the fact of sexual harassment itself, but by an event that occurred later and contributed to the girl’s understanding of her own experience [3, p. 164, 167].

Freud went back to the problem of psychic trauma after the First World War. Working with participants of combat action, he came to the conclusion that trauma appears as a reaction to a particular event, a physical or emotional blow that affects all the senses and against which the mind and body cannot defend themselves [5]. These acute experiences, neuroses according to the terminology of Freud himself, arise due to unexpectedness and fear caused by an unpredictable stressful situation [5]. According to the Austrian thinker, it breaks through the “protection against excitement” (from the German word *Reitzschutz*), which leads to a violation of the mechanisms of mental protection of a person from external stimuli. The main defense against such invasion, according to the findings of Sigmund Freud, is either amnesia or repression, as a result of which the victim forgets or denies the stressful event. A traumatic experience can remain in a latent state for several days or even years; however, this does not mean that it will not manifest later in the form of dreams or inexplicable abnormal behavior [6, p. 122-123].

As we can see, Freud, studying neuroses and traumas, came to the conclusion that the problem does not lie in the event that a person was an eyewitness or participant in, but in their inability to leave this event in the past, to stop replaying what happened once [7, p. 20.]. In other words, trauma consists of the inability to draw a line between the individual’s current and past states. In fact, a person suffering from a traumatic syndrome is unable to let go of their past, which is obsessively replayed in their subconscious, forcing them to split between the actual conditions of existence and the picture of reality that is constructed by the psyche.

Despite the prominent place of mental trauma occupying the theoretical work of Sigmund Freud, a real interest in the phenomenon of “mental trauma” manifested itself only in the 1980s. The first professional community, which engaged in a comprehensive study of this phenomenon, became American psychiatrists, who studied the so-called “Vietnam syndrome” expressed in traumatic memories of the war and their long-term consequences for a person’s

mental health. Their work made it possible to medicalize “mental trauma” and include it as a diagnosis in the American Handbook of Psychiatry [8, p. 99]. In the process of further study of the military experience, it became clear that the identified symptoms are of a universal nature and are manifested in people who survived German concentration camps or were discriminated against on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion or other characteristics. Understanding that “war trauma, sexual violence, and the consequences of the Holocaust are very different phenomena,” the researchers of these phenomena showed at the same time that “in all these cases, the victim of past violence that remains psychologically unresolved, is under threat of the prolonged destruction of their personality. The symptoms of trauma sometimes appear only after many years” [8, p. 99]. As a result of these observations, they represented trauma, on the one hand, as a one-time event that dramatically changes life, and on the other hand, as a process that continues to influence people’s attitude to their past and their perception of their present and future [9, p. 7]. For them, the trauma becomes the starting point, which causes a whole chain of various emotional experiences that a person can neither express nor comprehend.

Taking into account the long-term impact of trauma on a person’s emotional state and health, the American researcher Cathy Caruth points out the illegitimacy of considering it either as an event of the past or as a present. According to the researcher, trauma is a way of communication that ensures the continuous presence of the experienced. The unexpected nature and spontaneity of a traumatic event leads to its rooting in the depths of the unconscious, which returns this experience in “nightmares and repeated actions of a person who has survived a trauma” [10, p. 2]. “Traumatic images and repetitions”, notes Caruth, “is a distortion of reality; rather, they arise as a result of the excess of what is seen” [11, p. 561]. In other words, the researcher believes that due to the inability of our consciousness to contain the idea of the experience, the trauma seeks to manifest itself in any way, seeks to express itself and overcome the gap between the experience and its understanding. Meanwhile, any flashback resists understanding; the strength of a traumatic event lies in the “break with understanding” [11, p. 569]. Given the fact that a person is not always able to express their feelings of what happened in the form of a coherent text, the voice of trauma can manifest itself in artistic images, dreams or obsessive actions.

According to Caruth, the irresistible desire of the trauma for manifestation and testimony indicates “its unceasing influence on the life” of the victim [4, p. 63]. The researcher is convinced that “extreme trauma creates a second self... a traumatized self is formed”. Of course, we are not talking about an entirely new “I”, this is the “I” that a person was with during the trauma, but which was mainly affected by the trauma – strongly, painfully and shockingly” [4, p. 26]. “Trauma and shame, doubts or feelings of guilt – as if in continuation of this thought, notes Laurie Vickroy – destroy important beliefs: confidence in one’s own safety or ability to live and act in the world, perception of the

world as meaningful and ordered, the idea of oneself as a worthy, strong and independent person”. As a result of this, the researcher concludes, we have every reason to say that “reduced or even undermined self-perception is a common feature of trauma of any origin” [12, p. 5, 22].

Given the destructive impact of trauma on a person’s identity and psycho-emotional state, we have every reason to accept Caruth’s reasonable opinion that the main sign of a person’s recovery can be considered the reconstruction of a person into an integral personality in the process of testifying about the trauma [4, p. 26]. It, as R.J. Lifton proves during a conversation with Caruth, “is the key to what a person very quickly begins to perceive as their responsibility as a survivor... a person, by bearing witness to others, to some extent transforms pain and guilt into responsibility, and this sense of responsibility has incredible therapeutic value. It is extremely valuable to society and therapeutic for every survivor. Testimony is therapeutic because of its ability to demonstrate this responsibility, and thus responsibility becomes a central means of reintegrating the individual. A person has this experience, and it oppresses them. The personality has to some extent disintegrated; the only way that can help a person feel better or justify the restoration of one’s self and the continuation of a full life can be the fulfilment of this responsibility to the dead. And fulfilment of responsibility through testimony, the realization of the mission of survivors is what allows a person to become whole again” [4, p. 27-28].

In contrast to Caruth, an American researcher Dominick LaCapra believes that traumas need not only testimony and expression, but also processing. In view of this, the researcher indicates the need to focus not only on the inability of a person to express a traumatic experience, but also on the ability to overcome the consequences of trauma by gradually weakening and eliminating recurring memories. According to LaCapra, trauma processing is a process of rationalizing the past, which contributes to the detraumatization of the event; it limits the repetition of the past, making the transition from melancholy to mourning [13, p. 13-14].

Dr. D. Lauba also proves the need to process a traumatic experience. Working with the victims of the Holocaust, he came to the conclusion that a traumatized individual must “deal with their own experience, give it a form, realize it, as if in the process of birthing something new” [4, p. 61]. For this, the researcher notes, the victim needs an interested listener who will allow them to talk. With this in mind, “testimony is the healing of a wound by formalizing and giving outlines to a disparate experience, healing by bringing such disparate fragments into a single whole” [4, p. 61]. To achieve this, the traumatized person must have a companion to help them create an internal addressee for internal dialogue. This, in turn, means that the creation of the narrative and structuring of the traumatic experience takes place in the process of internal dialogue. It helps the victim to overcome amnesia and silence and to put together fragments of memory about traumatic events that were broken during a long period of silence into a coherent

narrative, which will become part of the memory, and with it, the personal identity.

In general, in modern intellectual discourse, as numerous interviewees of Cathy Caruth [4] testify, the primary strategy of detraumatization is considered to be the representation and rationalization of traumatic experience. A person who proved to be able to express personal tragic memories in a symbolic form draws a line between the past and the present. This, in turn, allows her to perceive the traumatic experience not as permanently present, but as experienced once in the past. Alexander Etkind expresses the essence of such a transition using the categories “grief” and “mourning” [14, p. 24-41]. Grief, according to the researcher, consists in the eternal repetition of the experience, when a person is not ready to remember precisely because there is nothing to remember, since the past remains the present. Mourning, on the other hand, consists in eliminating the experienced tragedy, when the memory returns, marking the end of the traumatic syndrome. “With the help of magic, culture or analysis, mourning creates markers of difference that help vary serial representations of the past” [14, p. 37]. In many respects, these thoughts agree with the conclusions of M. Jay, who in his works emphasizes the temporal gap between the event and the trauma, which allows the work of mourning to manifest itself [15, pp. 13-14]. Under such conditions, mourning should be understood not only as a psychological, but also a socio-psychological category, as it implies a certain unity of the collective reaction to the event.

The need to bear witness to the trauma, mark the traces of loss and discursively stabilize the meaning of the trauma, indicated by the aforementioned researchers, is essential not only for the victim, but also for society in general. Evidence of trauma, as demonstrated by Dr. D. Lauba using the example of Holocaust victims, requires an appropriate, understanding, real or “imaginary” (in the terminology of B. Anderson [16]) audience. The presence of listeners helps the victims to form a story, form a narrative and present it in the form of a complete story to the narrator himself. At the same time, the circulation of emotions and stories generated by the traumatic experience, developed in this way, gives rise to the communities of loss, which become the principal author and the principal addressee of stories about trauma. Thanks to this, the trauma and the post-traumatic state caused by it trigger the mechanism of social consolidation and differentiation (“grief unites”). The ability to recognize the “commonality of pain” is the basis of the solidarity of the victims. At the same time, the “experience of pain” appears as a social watershed that symbolically isolates the traumatized from the rest of society [17, c. 257].

In general, a traumatic experience can manifest itself in a closed reaction due to increased anxiety or amnesia in the victims, as is observed, for example, in victims of sexual violence who try to cope with the trauma on their own [18, c. 52]; at the same time, as social anthropologist Leena Malkki proves, it can contribute to cohesion in the form of “spontaneous memorial communities”. According to

the researcher, they appear in times of calamity as a group of people connected by a “biographical, micro-historical, fragmentary feeling of a randomly arising community of memory and passing experience” [19, p. 91]. The significance of such communities is determined by emotional and psychological scars, and by the post-crisis life that these communities structure according to their own experiences. Their shared memory of a traumatic event can influence identities, ideas, desires, and beliefs, “formed and transformed into transient circumstances that were experienced together by strangers” [19, p. 92].

Defined by Malkki, the complex of psychological feelings that arise in eyewitnesses or participants of a certain tragic event, the experience and further living through the experience of which is difficult to express in words without trivialization, is called a collective trauma. Unlike personal trauma, collective trauma “works its way slowly, even insidiously, through the minds of those who have experienced it, and therefore lacks the suddenness usually associated with “trauma”. Meanwhile, it remains a form of shock” [20, p. 154]. In this context, it is appropriate to mention the post-war situation of Holocaust victims, who, as Aleida Assmann proves, took decades to speak [8, p. 105]. According to the researcher, this is caused, on the one hand, by the unwillingness of the victims to remember what they experienced, and on the other hand, by the reluctance of the social environment to listen to their stories [8, p. 105]. The situation changed markedly after the Eichmann trial in May 1960, at which a large number of Holocaust victims spoke. Thanks to this, the young generation of Jews, for the first time, had the opportunity to touch the pages of the tragic history of their people [8, p. 106]. At the end of the 1970s, the American television series “Holocaust” (directed by Marvin Chomsky), which was watched by many viewers in Germany, caused a sharp positive shift in identification with the victims of the Holocaust.

The consolidating influence of trauma, as evidenced by the devices we have mentioned, manifests itself not only in the form of spontaneous memorial communities, as Leena Malkki thought, but also due to the politicization of this or that phenomenon. For example, Cathy Caruth found that trauma studies “emerge and cease depending on whether they are politically supported or suppressed, implying that the struggle between understanding and misunderstanding in a traumatic experience and its research can be inextricably linked with collective forces of power and control” [4, p. 12]. This opinion is fully and completely shared by S. Ulberg, P. Hart, and S. Bos. In their work “The Long Shadow of Trouble: Social and Political Memory of the Disaster”, the researchers claim that usually, “politicians openly take the initiative in selecting events and situations, memories associated with them, as well as those lessons that could be drawn from these events. They give shape to the picture of the past that is available to the community” [17, p. 258]. Official versions of historical interpretations, archives, monuments, places of memory (Pierre Nora), public rituals and ceremonies, etc. are often used to realize this goal.

Focusing attention on the importance of political support for preserving in social memory specific or other events, including traumatic events, one should not forget that politicians quite often resort to the practice of actively forgetting the past [17, p. 258]. Often, for this, they resort to curtailing freedom of speech, as a result of which traumatic situations for society are pushed out of communicative and social memory, and later submitted in the form of a historical narrative demanded by the authorities. An illustrative example in this context can be the Holodomor of 1932-1933. The massive famine artificially organized by the then Soviet authorities led to the extermination, according to various estimates, of 4 to 10 million Ukrainians [21, p. 34]. Meanwhile, this terrible page of history for Ukrainian society during the Soviet era was not only deliberately pushed out of social and historical memory, but also forgotten, as evidenced by the short course "History of Ukraine" published in 1940. In this work, there is no mention of the artificial famine organized by the Soviet authorities in 1932-33. Instead, it is said that at the beginning of 1933, the first five-year plan was fully implemented... More than 60% of the peasant farms of the USSR were united in collective farms. The sown area of state farms and collective farms accounted for more than 70% of the entire sown area. The country moved from a small individual peasant economy to a large collective farm armed with advanced technology" [22, p. 356]. Somewhat later, it is clarified that "the movement for complete collectivization took place in Ukraine in the conditions of a sharp class struggle against the kulaks and the kulak agents. Bukharinites, Trotskyists and bourgeois nationalists tried by all means to disrupt the collective farm movement and return the country to capitalism" [22, p. 361].

It is evident that the artificial famine of 1932-33 became one of the most terrible pages of Ukrainian history; however, this traumatic experience for the entire Ukrainian society, in the absence of proper political support of the Soviet government, the secrecy of archives, and the physical extermination of the vast majority of its eyewitnesses, did not lead to the formation of "spontaneous memorial communities" and the consolidation of society around this event in a period of political pressure. Meanwhile, its weakening and the reduction of political harassment of its eyewitnesses contributed to the revival of public memories of this event in communicative and historical memory. The stories of the surviving witnesses and the everyday social practices laid down by them in the culture contributed to the growth of public attention to the topic and history of the Holodomor, which made it possible to deepen knowledge about this event.

The peculiarity of the Ukrainian memory of the artificial famine of 1932-33 gives reason to consider rational the conclusions of Susan Ulberg, Paul Hart and Celeste Bos that memory "can be imposed, but it can also present oneself to people – officials including. Locked away in our brains, memory, however, avoids being completely subject to our control and our desires. Memory and history live all around us in the stories we hear, in the (school) texts we

read, in the people we work with, in the homes we live in. Thus, in disaster management, as in any other sphere of organizational and political life, the past is both a subject and an object" [17, p. 259].

The politicization of memories of traumatic experiences, like many others, is usually due to the unique place of collective memory in the formation of group identity. The French philosopher Renan was one of the first to notice this ability of memory. In his 1882 Sorbonne lecture "What is a Nation?", he argued that a nation is "a soul, a spiritual principle. The soul, this spiritual principle, consists of two things that are essentially one. One in the past, the other in the future. One is the joint ownership of a rich heritage of memories, the second is a common agreement, the desire to live together, to enjoy a common and indivisible heritage... A heroic past, great people, fame (but fair one) – this is the main capital on which the national idea is based" [23, p. 261]. It is evident that from the standpoint of modern positivist science, the given definition causes certain remarks due to Renan's appeal to the highly controversial concept of the collective "soul". Meanwhile, it contains that meaning, revolutionary for its time, which attracted many researchers of a nation in the 20th-21st centuries. Appealing to the collective "soul", as Assmann proves, Renan "adds to the idea of a nation as a community united by a common will, the concept of a nation as a community united by a common experience" [8, p. 37]. That is, in order for a certain community to become a nation, as Renan himself proves, it must share "past common glory and common sorrows", "endure together, rejoice, hope together". At the same time, the researcher assures that "shared endurance unites more than shared joys. In national memories, sadness is more important than triumph: sadness imposes obligations, sadness encourages joint efforts" [23, p. 262].

In our opinion, the use of terminology, which is contradictory from the point of view of our time, does not give any grounds for devaluing the theoretical work of Ernest Renan, who was many years ahead of Maurice Halbwachs [24] and became the first researcher who focused attention on the important role of collective memories and common, including traumatic experience, for the formation of collective identity. However, this problem was not in the focus of the French scientist's attention, which, apparently, became the main reason for his lack of attention to the very phenomenon of collective memories and their relationship with history. Because, as Pierre Nora proves in the Introduction to his monumental work "Realms of Memory" ("Les Lieux de memoire"), these concepts are very far "from being synonymous. ...Memory is an always relevant phenomenon, a living inner connection with the eternal present. History is a representation of the past. Memory places the memory in the sacred space, and history expels it from there, making it prosaic. Memory is generated by the social group it unites... On the contrary, history belongs to everyone and no one, which makes universality its vocation" [25, p. 20]. Of course, history can be considered a the universal memory of humanity, however, as Maurice Halbwachs quite rightly observes, "universal memory does

not exist. The carrier of any collective memory is a group limited in space and time” [24, p. 20]. This, in turn, means that it is possible to collect the entire set of past events into a single picture only by removing them from the memory of the groups that kept memories of them, by cutting the threads that connect them with the psychology of those social environments in which they took place, leaving only a chronological and wandering outline of them.

The observations made by Nora and Halbwachs give grounds for asserting that only those historical events that can be included in a set of images significant for a particular community and meet the value, cultural and emotional demands of all members of the community, and are capable of generating a common will, have a consolidating significance in the vision of the future [26]. In other words, the value consensus, which is absolutely necessary for the emergence of group identity, is formed only by those conventions based on memories – events and images that have a consolidating charge and determine the vision of its future. Society preserves from oblivion the relics and traces of the past that are important for the preservation of one’s own identity, after they lose a living connection with their original context, with the help of material carriers (books, paintings, letters, memorials, etc.) in numerous cultural institutions (archives, libraries, museums, etc.), positioning them in the form of cultural memory [8, p. 54]. It ensures the internal stability of the group, whose representatives, despite constant contact and changing relations with representatives of other cultures, can easily recognize themselves among others not only in a synchronous, but also in a diachronic dimension.

In the memory of the community, as Ernest Renan also noted, not only the heroic past, great people, and glory, but also numerous victims, sadness, and regrets are preserved. They, as the French researcher proved, consolidate society and strengthen the nation’s positive ideas about itself and determine the vision of its future. Instead, everything that undermines this heroic image is to be forgotten. Obviously, it is precisely with this in mind that victories are mentioned much more often than defeats, a testimony of which can be a biblical story. Meanwhile, as Aleida Assmann rightly observes, appealing to Renan’s report, “under certain conditions, even defeats can become the central events of national commemorations” [8, p. 66]. “Defeat,” says the researcher, “does not necessarily destroy the team’s self-image and even, on the contrary, strengthens national cohesion. Indeed, defeats are commemorated with great pathos and rich ceremonials precisely when national identity is based on sacrifice. In this case, the memory of the sufferings and crimes experienced is preserved in order to activate the sense of community in the face of external pressure, legitimize one’s own claims and mobilize resistance” [8, p. 66]. In this context, it is appropriate to recall the story of Ivan Mazepa, whose defeat became a symbol of the Ukrainian desire for independence from Russian enslavement.

Despite the defeat’s important role in the formation of group identity, as Assmann proves, it should not be equated with trauma. “Trauma – in contrast to the heroic

narrative, does not mobilize and consolidate the nation, but violates, even destroys, its identity” [8, p. 69]. This traumatic experience of suffering and shame has difficulty accessing memory because the experience is not integrated into the individual’s or the nation’s positive self-image. For him, there are no culturally approved forms of reception and memorial traditions [8, p. 77]. As an example, we can recall the story of the Baturyn tragedy (November 1708). During the punitive operation, Russian troops slaughtered all residents of the city of Baturyn, regardless of age and gender [27, p. 73.]. Meanwhile, until the end of the 20th century, this tragic story did not receive due attention either among Ukrainian or among foreign scientists, until there were grounds for presenting it in the memory of the nation, about the suffering experienced on the way to independence. We can say that such a narrative took shape in 2008 for the first time, i.e. 300 years after this event. The Baturyn tragedy was represented as a dramatic consequence of Ivan Mazepa’s military and political speech and the signing of the Ukrainian-Swedish union [28]. This, in turn, indicates that a traumatic experience can receive social recognition and acquire symbolic articulation only a few decades or even centuries after the event itself. In order to become part of cultural memory, he has to go a long way and find forms of commemoration that can consolidate society (nation) and deepen its self-image.

Incorporation of a traumatic experience into the system of images significant for the collective identity of a certain community is called cultural trauma. It, as Jeffrey Alexander proves, arises “when members of a certain community feel that they have been forced to experience some terrible event that leaves unforgettable traces in their group consciousness, is forever engraved in their memory and fundamentally and irreversibly changes their subsequent identity” [29, p. 6]. Note that cultural trauma does not arise as a result of personal participation, but through inclusion in social practices of transmission of the sacralized canon of cultural memory, formed from elements of the heroic and tragic past. In this sense, it is more formalized, capable of being passed on to future generations, and also provides for a certain range of interpretations. This, in turn, gives us reason to assume that, unlike the mental trauma of an individual, which arises as a result of an unexpected and shocking experience, cultural trauma is constructed gradually and, as Piotr Sztompka proves, goes through several stages of traumatization:

- 1) the presence of a cultural environment that contributes to the occurrence of trauma;
- 2) traumatic incident;
- 3) search for appropriate representations and creation of traumatic discourse;
- 4) proliferation of traumatic symptoms onto the community to which they are addressed;
- 5) post-traumatic adaptation (institutionalization of discourse);
- 6) detraumatization – the gradual fading of trauma symptoms or the appearance of a new trauma that shifts the attention of the community [30, p. 8].

The periodization proposed by Sztompka gives grounds for asserting that any event does not become traumatic by itself. Cultural trauma is a property attributed by society to specific historical events through the dissemination of discourse aimed at informing society about the existence of trauma and showing its direct relationship with collective identity. After the Holocaust, perhaps the most revealing example of cultural trauma can be Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. In the representation of Ukrainian society, it is explained as another attempt by Russia to destroy the Ukrainian people and Ukrainian identity in order to ensure its historical legitimacy through the age-old Russian tradition. With political support, Russia's military aggression against Ukraine can be represented as a pan-European cultural trauma due to Russia's encroachment on the democratic values of a united Europe.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the fact that modern studies of traumatic experience are inextricably linked with the scientific work of Sigmund Freud, who was one of the first to explicate trauma as a destroyer of "protection", currently, there is no reason to talk about a related experience of trauma at the individual and collective level. Of course, we can talk about a certain kinship between individual and collective trauma, which usually arises as an emotional reaction of eyewitnesses to a specific event or act of violence, which is accompanied by the destruction of their identity. With the political support of the victims and eyewitnesses of the traumatic event, favorable conditions arise for testifying and processing the trauma due to the emergence of a collective reaction in the form of mourning. Thanks to it, trauma and the post-traumatic state caused by it trigger the mechanism of social consolidation and the development of new meanings and mechanisms of group identity. Meanwhile, in cases where the individual or collective trauma does not find political support, and with it, an external audience, trauma can act as a social watershed, which will contribute to the development of social exclusion, symbolically isolating the traumatized from the rest of society.

Unlike individual and collective trauma, cultural trauma does not arise as a result of personal participation in traumatic events, but through inclusion in social practices of cultural memory transmission. In other words, cultural trauma is a narrative about actual or imagined events that threaten the community's identity. In view of this, cultural trauma is usually formalized and presented in the form of cultural memory, which ensures the group's internal stability and defines its future vision. This, in turn, indicates that, unlike individual and collective trauma, cultural trauma does not lead to the destruction of identity. On the contrary, it should be considered a consciously constructed narrative about tragic events, which reinforces the consolidating value of images significant for the identity of a specific community.

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