Nataliya L. Rumyantseva, Olena I. Logvynenko, Elena V. Chilina

The Crisis of Ukrainian Higher Education Reform: Moving Towards a Trauma Informed Understanding

Two Facets of Crisis

When it comes to higher education sector in Ukraine the key descriptor of the status quo is unequivocally crisis. This crisis is apparent in a number of different ways. Firstly, the higher education reform process itself is said to be in crisis through the accounts of local and international observers (e.g. Janmaat, 2008; Fimyar, 2008). There is an ostensible flight of students eager to pursue educational and career opportunities abroad. This has grave implications for Ukraine's human capital and future prosperity (Semiv and Hvozdovych, 2012). Those who stay often cheat or bribe their way through the system (e.g. DenisovaSchmidt, Prytula, Rumyantseva, 2018). The overgrown university system with over 300 HEIs for 47 million of population is unnecessarily large both in terms of the student base which they are meant to serve as well as qualified academic staff which they are meant to employ (Rumyantseva and Logvynenko, 2017). Academic staff also vote with their feet by leaving higher education to join industry, civil service or civil society organisations, thus depleting higher education of qualified cadre. The question naturally arises: who are these institutions serving and what sustains their existence? Yet each one of those intuitions just like any other organisation anywhere in the world, is naturally pre-occupied with organisational survival, which perhaps in part explains why Ministerial attempts to close some higher education institutions (HEIs) down were met with fierce resistance (Rumyantseva and Logvynenko, 2017) and it was Serhiy Kvit, the Minister of Education at the time who stepped down instead in 2016. National employers are disappointed with graduates' employability skills (World Economic Forum, 2011), although it is difficult to gain agreement from the university leaders, who take a more positive view of higher education quality according to a recent survey (Democratic Initiatives Foundation, 2015).

The second dimension of crisis is evidence in the thinking of academics and professionals studying higher education reform in Ukraine. On the one hand, Western academics (e.g. Janmaat, 2008), donors and consultants (OSI & NEPC, 2006; World Bank, 2004, 2005; Darvas, 2003; UNDP 2018) are quick to offer critical observations of the reform processes.

Most analytical accounts of crisis result in identifying some form of tension between Soviet legacies and Western/European values as the underlying reasons for crisis. Shaw, Chapman, Rumyantseva (2013) engage competing cultural values to explain why Bologna related changes are only partly implemented at the intuitional level. Oleksiyenko (2016) draws on the framework of the incompatible ideological perspectives. Shaw (2013) offers detailed analysis of the incompatible governance frameworks in an effort to understand what is at the bottom of the crisis. She concludes that the culprit is to be found in the conflict of the underlying assumptions about power, locus of control and acceptable sources of leadership. The conflict once again is located between the ever incompatible authoritarian (Soviet) and neo-liberal (Western) mind-sets. If only the nation could resolve these differences by agreeing on how they wish to mobilise power and from which sources, the crisis will be resolved. A monumental task of collective reflection on sources and purposes of leadership, which if accomplished would bring the current impasse to an end and allow the system progress and develop. This is a difficult challenge in the context where abuse of power and favouritism have been described as rampant (Osipian, 2017, 2014, 2010).

For the time being, however, the clash between the two mind-sets remains in the state of an impasse and the system itself is said to be in a trap (Riabchuk, 2007). The second underlying theme in these studies is what Fimyar (2010:63-64) calls 'an attack against the postcommunist state's inability to cope with the crisis'. Political leadership of the country is criticized in the studies for the lack of commitment, expertise, vision, and strategy, as well as for the slow pace of reform and selective implementation of existing policies. Many commentators describe the Ukrainian education system as structurally ''too centralized,'' and in terms of institutional practices, ''too Soviet.'' An assumption is made and so far remains unchallenged in the literature that 20+ years of independence is a sufficiently long time for the society in general and higher education system in particular to undergo deep, large scale, social, economic and political transformation.

Fimyar (2010) has attempted to offer an alternative approach with an intention 'to disrupt… the opposition between Soviet legacies and Western/European values'. Discourse analysis of higher education policy documents written by Ukrainians for Ukrainians initially offers a possibility of an alternative angle, something uncontaminated by the Western neoliberal influence. Much to the readers' (and possibly researcher's?) disappointment, the elaborate and time consuming analysis does not reveal any locally cultivated insights that may have been overlooked by the Western observers. Instead it concludes that Ukrainian government

has embraced the notion crisis in the early policy documents, at the same time laying down foundation for vigorous and potentially destructive self-critique. These documents tie higher education system's development to 'catch-up Europeanisation'. Insufficient recognition is made of the long standing positive aspects of the system. Instead, the crisis has been given legitimacy by system level leaders and politicians in the onset of Ukrainian independence. Western observers critique Ukrainian government who are only happy to be the first to critique themselves. But does such critical thinking have the ability to lead to critical action that would enable positive transformations? Or is this the case of the crisis of critical thinking in higher education leadership? Or the crisis of thinking about the system more widely?

It is on the backdrop of the critical thinking standstill, that this chapter engages the concepts of historical memory (Fedinec and Csermocsko, 2017) and the collective trauma (Sotero, 2006; Bowen and Shaanta Murshid, 2016; Somasundaram, 2007) in an effort to look at the higher education reform from a historical and trauma-informed informed perspective (Bowen and Murshid, 2016). We argue that what is happening in the sector now can be better understood and appreciated in the wider historical context of lives of the Ukrainian people and the archetypal notions of leadership that have formed over the centuries in the collective Ukrainian memory. We draw on elements of Ukraine's difficult and traumatic history to point to the potentially unhealed wounds in the collective memory that may be affecting society and higher education reform processes in the present day. It is because of such wounds and 'hot memory' (Fedinec and Csermocsko, 2017) that critical thinking unless informed by trauma informed understanding, is likely to become unbalanced and unproductive. Engaging the trauma informed understanding (Bowen and Murshid, 2016) can offer tools for more careful and specific approaches to the analysis of HE reforms both by the Ukrainian decision makers and those external observers, scholars, consultants who presumably study Ukrainian HE reform with constructive intentions. We juxtapose that current degrees of trauma awareness in Ukrainian and Western leaders and analysts is currently insufficient. And yet it is possible that collective trauma legacy continues to influence Ukrainian leaders, follower and the decision making processes in the present. Whilst, Ukraine's historical victim position is central to this analysis, we take care to avoid casting Ukraine in the light of helpless victimhood alone. We aim to disentangle the sources of historical victimisation from the present day realities by looking at the position of Ukraine via-a-vi surrounding empirical power and the role of the West. This approach offers a

different pathway for enabling trauma informed critical thinking that has higher capacity to lead to critical being (Barnett, 1997) and positive change in all national and sub-national contexts that experienced events of collective traumatic.

Historical Leadership Roles and the Events of Collective Trauma

Kovryga and Nickel (2004: 610) perceptively suggest that Ukrainian society has a strong shadow side, a parallel reality that exists behind the ideological façade which serves the purpose of satisfying the international pressures for reform. The shadow side 'represents a more authentic progression towards change and the struggles, which underlie survival'. This locally informed perspective is valuable in understanding the insider realities which often remain hidden to the external observer's eye. However, we invite the reader to consider an extension of this one sided statement and allow a possibility of simultaneous co-existence of the authentic shadow and the authentic visible side. After all, Ukrainian government has voluntarily signed up to the Bologna process in 2005 and many of the modernisation goals that form key elements of the reform had been set out in the Ukrainian policy documents long before that (Fimyar, 2010). Analytically allowing for the presence of these conflicting motivations opens up a different path for analysis of the role of leadership in HE and approaches to leadership development in higher education. Understanding the possible sources of the rift between the shadow and the visible side, we argue, holds not only the explanatory power but also serves as bridge towards a different kind of critical thinking about the crisis. But just how did this rift came about? Fimyar (2014) in her analysis of western policies in non-western contexts, connects it to the violent exercise of power that was historically present in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Ukrainian history in particularly is full of disadvantageous for Ukraine power dynamics and struggle for identity and statehood (Subtelny, 2009). The historical events of 1933 Holodomor are but one (admittedly largest in scale) example of where the exercise of power had been transmuted into the exercise of violence towards the Ukrainian people.

Although Ukrainian people existed since the collapse of the Kyivan Rus in the 12th century, Ukrainian state, along with many other former Soviet republic, has only come to exist in a non-fleeting form in 1991, making Ukraine one of the youngest countries on the planet. However, unlike, for instance Baltic countries, whose independence enabled them to return to their once strong autonomy, Ukraine has emerged as an 'unexpected nation' (Wilson, 2015)

with virtually no history or experience of self-governance. And yet, unlike Belarus, who did not have any HEIs on its present day territory, until the first one was established by the Soviet government, Ukrainian higher education (yes in the absence of the Ukrainian state) played a leading role in the struggles for independence. The first medieval universities were established in the modern day Western Ukraine by members of Ukrainian clergy. Their founders used them as vehicles for promoting Ukrainian identity (in this instance through Christian Orthodox religion) in the face of external threats of Catholicism and the Rule of the Polish King (Yershova and Gordiichuk, 2013: 474). Universities that opened in the East of the modern day Ukraine were the initiative of the Russian Tsar. They followed a more centralised model of governance and hence conformed more to the expectations of their sponsors (Osipian, 2008).

Whilst the absence of independent nation state has limited Ukrainians' capacity to develop and improve the skills of self-governance, it simultaneously created favourable conditions for development of the shadow side of leadership, namely the skills of leading via the means of resistance and defiance against the dominant powers, with universities and university leaders often playing a key role in the process. These efforts were driven by the desire for survival, as a distinct ethnic group with its own language and culture. Some of the key leaders of the Ukrainian struggle for independence, for instance, Ivan Mazepa (1687-1708) and Stepan Bandera (1909-1959), are best known for their achievements in these domains, which also explains why different observes, depending on where their loyalties lay may choose to view them as historical heroes on the one hand or as traitors (as was the case with Mazepa) or terrorists (as was the case with Bandera), on the other.

Understanding these historical patterns of relationship to authority and direction and purpose of decision making efforts, provides the context for what Kovryga and Nickel (2004: 624) call 'well mastered processes of de-centralisation in [modern] Ukraine'. Fimyar (2014) uses the term ''partisan' responses to policies in illiberal contexts' to describe the same phenomenon. According to these interpretations, Ukrainians continue to engage in day to day decentralisation of centrally issued directives. Such decentralisation, occurs through local action in private that goes against the grain of publicly stated goals. It happens at the policy level, level of individual HEIs as well as individual academics and students. Whether the center was Imperial Russia, Austro-Hungarian Empire, Imperial Poland or the Soviet Union is of lesser importance. What matters for the purposes of our analysis is that such context creates a fruitful ground for developing approach to leadership and followership, characterised by resistance, subversion

and opposition. If the centre was viewed as an unwelcome imposition, from the perspective of the oppressed, subversion became a healthy response to unhealthy circumstances, a defence necessary for survival.

Predictably, the struggles for identity by Ukrainians were met with opposition from the surrounding imperial powers who had opposing goals. The struggle was often overlooked or ignored by the Western European leaders who were more concerned with carefully balancing their own relationships with Russia and Poland (Reid, 1997). On more than one historical occasion Western Europeans chose to collude with greater powers at the expense of Ukrainians' right to self-identification and independence (Reid, 1997, Subtelny, 2009). This is an important point that many present day Western analysts of higher education reform tend to overlook when critically analysing Ukrainian policies and yet these facts may influence the ethics of attributing responsibility. Naturally, such profound conflict of interest between Ukraine and the Imperial powers as well as Ukraine and Western Europe has led to relationships, which for Ukrainians at least were ridden with mistrust. Despite this, however, Ukrainian higher education continued to produce high quality intellectuals who continuously cultivated home grown capacity for self-identification and nation building. These individuals were often risking their lives for engaging in what Davies (2015) calls critical action. Stalin's rule over the Soviet Union has been particularly full of aggression towards Ukraine' intellectuals, which resulted in targeted elimination of intellectual elites in 1920s-30s (e.g. Serhiy Efremov, Les Kurbas), 1940s-50s (e.g. Mykola Holodnyi, Oleksandr Bogomolets). Besides, institutions that were in place such as 'Ukrainian Academy of Science, which were originally established to foster Ukrainian nation-building, were converted into institutions aimed at promoting Soviet ideology' in 1920-30s (Hladchenko, Dobbins, Jungblut, 2018).

The 1930s have turned out to be particularly dark and damaging for Ukraine (Applebaum, 2018). After elimination of intellectual elites who performed a function of the national leaders for Ukrainian self-determination, Stalin has initiated the policy of the so called *prodrazvyorstka,* which lead to the historical events of Holodomor of 1933 (Applebaum, 2017). 'Stalin directed confiscation of harvests and foods' (Bezo and Maggie, 2015) in Ukrainian countryside was carefully planned and well executed (Klid and Motyl, 2012). Travel restrictions and road blocks were put in place to restrict movement as much as possible. Eventually, people deprived of food and means to seek it elsewhere, slowly and painfully died of hunger. The exact casualties are uncertain as Stalin ordered the execution of

the lead census takers (Subtelny, 2009; Applebaum, 2018) but the estimates of this genocide range from 3 to 6 million (Subtelny, 2009). Those who survived suffered profound humiliation, witnessed their childrens', parents', neighbours' deaths. In many places funerals were prohibited, bodies remained on the streams as means of further terrorisation. Cannibalism flourished.

Historical trauma is a relatively new concept in the academic literature and its connection to the large scale change process is largely under-explored. Historical trauma occurs where a dominant group subjects a certain population to all or one of the following: long-term segregation, displacement, physical and/or psychological violence, economic destruction and cultural dispossession (Sotero, 2006; Bowen and Shaanta Murshid, 2016; Somasundaram, 2007). Embedded in the definition is a deliberately violent use of power and hence destructive exercise of leadership with devastating consequences for affected populations. Trauma effect goes beyond the affected population. Cumulative research evidence suggests that trauma survivors pass the trauma onto subsequent generations. Levine (2015:163) notes that in the context of trauma treatment 'individuals frequently described surprisingly specific and often horrific images, sensations and emotions about events that seemed quite real but could not possibly have happened to them'. Research into survivors and their off springs identifies an array of negative consequences at individual, familial and collective levels, ranging from depressive moods (Major, 1996), fear and mistrust they struggle to explain (Rowland-Klein and Dunlop, 1997), pervasive sense of shame (Karenian et al., 2010), increased suicidal thoughts in some cases (Elias et al., 2012), and as some propose, societal loss of culture and way of life (Evans-Campbell, 2008).

In the specific case of Ukraine, Holodomor both followed and preceded other longer lasting and ongoing events of repression of Ukrainian uprisings and resistant movements, and deprivations of basic necessities. Denial is a significant component of the psychological response to trauma (Chang, 2017). Both victims, perpetrators and those who witness atrocities (particularly when they choose not to interfere) are motivated albeit for different reasons to deny the events took place (Applebaum, 2017). In line with the usual response to trauma, Holodomor remained a taboo subject in both Ukraine and the West, gaining only marginal amount of attention in Ukraine since independence and some recent attention from the Western researchers (Applebaum, 2018) and US Senate (Najarian, 2018). Unsurprisingly, the effects of Holodomor remain largely understudied. The role of Western Europe in relation

to these events is equally understudied. Reid (1997), an English journalist a historian comments that many Western journalists working in Ukraine at the time had chosen not to report the atrocities back to their headquarters in Europe and the US out of desire to hold on to their privileged access to then very closed Soviet Union. Applebaum (2017) describes how the Soviet apparatus kept Western journalists in check and one particular New Year Times correspondent had gone as far as to justify the infliction of suffering, repeating the language of the Stalin's inner circles. Clearly, such lack of critical action would have contributed to the process of denial which the Soviet government was motivated to maintain. It may also have contributed to the historically accumulated mistrust between Ukraine and the West of which perhaps present day analysts and consultants in higher education remain unaware.

Trauma does not only occur in a given point in time. It has a way of finding its way into the future through the process of trans-generational transmission (Evans-Campbell, 2008). As Ukrainian historian Grycak (2015:32-33) asserts 'It is nearly impossible to find a family in Ukraine who in the 20th century would not have suffered from violence, managed to stay in one place or keep their property. This fact gives us a key to understanding Ukrainians' behaviour. According to surveys, what they most want is safety and stability in order to break away from this insane history.' Although empirical research into trans-generational trauma transmission in Ukraine is very limited, Bezo and Maggie' study (2015) is a valuable exception. These Canadian researches have studied resulting emotional states and the coping mechanisms by engaging three generations of the survivors of the actual events of 1933. They were specifically interested in investigating 'whether potential trauma, stemming from the Holodomor, continues to exert an intergenerational impact' (p. 88) in the present day. Some of their findings bear connection to Ukrainians' thoughts and feelings about leadership, and the manner in which they are likely to engage with authority and power in the present. Given the mass scale of artificially engineered hunger in Ukraine and the intern-generational effects of trauma, we propose that Bezo and Maggie's (2015) findings may hold explanatory potential for the leadership dynamics in the modern day higher education system. And just as Holodomor itself straddled Russia, Ukraine and the West through the perpetrator-victim(non)rescuer triangle, the legacy of it may hold the explanatory power for the crisis of critical thinking around higher education reform in Ukraine that we are witnessing today.

Bezo and Maggie (2015) report two sets of findings from the interviews with three generations of Holodomor survivors: traumatic emotional states associated with Holodomor

and trauma-based coping strategies. Specifically, three types of fear were reported: fear of repeated abuse of power; fear to take action and 'fear and mistrust in others'. Fear of another genocide, a repeated abuse of power is a natural extension of the Holodomor events. Fear to take action stems from memories of server punishments that survivors witness in others who attempted to take action to secure food and were killed by armed soldiers. This emotional state continue to live in all three generations of respondents taking on a form of 'a fear to oppose, challenge, openly question, speak out against or strive to change the status quo, authority, government, public policy, or legislation' (p. 90). Third generation of respondents described how they came to internalise such fears through 'family oral histories of Holodomor-related atrocities'. The knowledge that Ukrainians were targeted and mistreated and hence isolated from others also connected to fear and mistrust of others. Other emotional states reported by the participants included sadness over the loss of family members and deaths of others, ethnic related shame 'as a result of the Holodomor being inflicted on Ukrainians'. Interestingly, anger was the least discussed emotions but was also present in the interviews. These difficult emotional states necessitated certain coping strategies that resulted in patterns of surviving behaviours some of which may bear relevance to the inter-personal relationships today. Namely, the perceived need for self-preservation and 'survival' were reported to create 'an increased social hostility'. 'Hence, an indifference toward others emerged, that was reported not as an intrinsic selfishness, but rather the result of the perceived need for self-preservation that emerged during the Holodomor' (p. 91).

Towards Trauma Informed Understanding of Higher Education Reform

Literature on Ukrainian higher education reform reveals overlapping themes with those uncovered in the research on the collective trauma and broader Ukrainian history. Just like traumatic experiences become locked in the collective consciousness, the higher education system may be trapped in the historical patterns of authority, power, and violence which are being propagated through the system in the unending and unchecked cycle of the transgenerational transmission of trauma. We aim to develop understanding of how some of the trauma patterns may be playing out in the higher education system at various levels and seek insights as to how such cycles of trauma may be interrupted by engaging critical thinking in trauma sensitive ways.

Centralisation/Decentralisation Tension in the Bologna expectations: un-reflected, undiscussed and unresolved

Although Ukrainian policy makers have voluntarily signed up to the Bologna process, Ukrainian observers note the commitment to engage has dwindled over time (Shevchenko, 2018). Kovacs's analysis (2014) notes a dual motivation of the Ukrainian higher education policy makers: to preserve good relations with EU and to preserve much desired independence at the same time. As recent political events have demonstrated, both of these goals are equally desired by the Ukrainian people (possibly with the exception of some parts of the Eastern territories) and the Ukrainian government. Ukrainian higher education policy makers reconcile these opposing tendencies through non-confrontational decentralisation expressed in quiet decline in frequency of reports and inclusion of only limited information in the reports (Shevchenko, 2018; Educational Policy Portal, 2015). Such strategy precludes the Western counterparts from understanding the reality of what is happening, keeping the tensions around national building in the shadow. At the same time it maintains control with the Ukrainian side whilst avoiding possible open confrontation with the West. The tensions between national interests and the requirements of the Bologna process are not unique to Ukraine, although other nations have been more open in vocalising their concerns and more assertive at reconciling tensions (Ravinet, 2008). As a younger and more recent newcomer to the Bologna process, Ukraine's position is more vulnerable than that of Germany, UK or France. This position visa-vi the West is historically familiar to Ukraine and carries similar power structures as in the past. The other side of this two way process is the uncertainty of the European response, should Ukraine choose to be more vocal about its national priorities. Western observers' ease at historically insensitive critiquing of Ukraine for poor performance in higher education reform may be experienced as emotionally charged with shame, further blocking the possibility of dialogue. Ukrainian policy makers reconcile this dilemma by explicitly dis-owning agency in the official policy documents through an impersonal use of language (Fimyar, 2010), thus setting up one of the key building blocks of denial that sustains the transformational trap.

Fear of Authority and Fear to Take Action

The ambivalence of the overall policy environment and high levels of mistrust at the policy level are transmitted to the national level university leaders. In the context of over-populated higher education system and strong dependencies of HEIs on 'the political environment for regulations, funding, and legitimacy' (Hladchenko, Dobbins and Jungblutd, 2018: 9), individual institutions are placed in a position where their survival depends on rector's capacity to build relationships with civil servants and politicians. Present day ambivalence combined with the historical fear of authority creates a fertile ground for the abuse of power. Civil servants and politicians themselves exist in an ambivalent legal framework without clear sense of boundaries and accountability (e.g. see Kovryga and Nickel (2004) for some insightful analysis). Who wins? Who losses? What are the definitions of success and failure? The possibility of resisting or challenging the governmental policies is not widely considered by the institutional leaders. Critical reflection and thinking if engaged does not translate into critical action. Instead, leaders are co-coped into the political processes and HEIs are being engages to serve the political ends. Such realities both shape the existing leaders' behaviours and attract individuals to these roles who are content with low levels of agency available to them, in other words non-leaders.

These dynamics resonate closely with that Cooper's (2017) describes as dysfunctional social processes in societies with the historical experience of collective trauma. Similar to trauma victims, university rectors along with the organisations for which they are responsible, find that they are being caught in a double bind (Weaver 2008; Shaw, Chapman, Rumyantseva, 2013). Their stated goals are to develop and improve their HEIs, however in order to hold on to their roles and possibly to protect their institutions from closures or mergers, they strike deals with civil servants and politicians which often divert institutional goals towards political ends. Observers comment that such dynamics continue at the cost of causing harm to educational institutions and undermining of their social functions (Hladchenko, Dobbins and Jungblutd's, 2018). Little space is left for changes advocated for by the scholars of the reform process or any change that university rectors themselves may see as necessary. Once again, as in previous historical circumstances, survival needs dictate action. Whether the underlying basis of this collusion stem from lack of awareness, fear to take action, objective necessity to survival or a combination of these factors is a subject for an empirical exploration.

However, continuous compliance with conflicted expectations of the Ministry and active denial of well recognised challenges facing HEIs by this potentially powerful institutional leaders continuously contribute to the transformational trap that generates a state of crisis in the system. Non-compliance may lead to distraction.

Similar forces at work at the organisational level have been reported by Shaw, Chapman, Rumyantseva (2013) who note that individual academics receive conflicting messages about what is expected of them, which in turns reproduces the double bind at the individual level (Bateson, 1972). Shaw, Chapman and Rumyantseva (2011:8) provide empirical evidence of academic staff's fear of authority, particularly exemplified in an interview quote 'It is not such a good thing here to stand out', whilst recognising that 'the dearth of critical voices towards university leadership was likely related to a fear of authority that has been shown to be rather common in post-socialist societies'. Additionally, the lack of critical voices in confidential interviews with Western based researchers may signify the lack of awareness or a state of denial of one's own fearful mood in relation to their leaders. Fear and particularly the denial of fear, once permanently instituted in the collective consciousness becomes a selffulfilling prophecy that runs the system on auto-pilot (Argyris, 2010). Whilst significant responsibility is disowned at the policy level, it often becomes shifted into academic staff (Rumyantseva and Logvynenko, 2017). Although academics staff have been described as highly capable critical thinkers, their sphere of action is severely constrained by regulations, budgets and fear of authority. Ultimately, the responsibility for enacting change becomes shifted onto actors who are not in a position to implement it to the desired extent, which further perpetuating their sense of helplessness typical of victims of the collective trauma.

Self-preservation and Indifference Towards Others

Higher education system as well as the broader political system in Ukraine are frequently described as corrupt (Osipian, 2008, 2017). Positions of power are occupied by individuals who often misuse their office for private gain subverting the publicly stated intentions. The general recognition of these dynamics by Ukrainians themselves has been captured in a satirical TV series 'Servant of the People' and then skilfully presented in the 'The Economist' (2018) as a part of the broader discussion of corruption and abuse of power in Ukraine. Much has been written about this particular aspect of Ukrainian politics (e.g. Yurchenko, 2018). Osipian demonstrates how numerous governments have exercised strong leverage over

universities through abuse of power, how inconsistent and ambivalent expectations leave opportunities open for abusive practices within the HE system, resulting in corruption in licensing, accreditation, admissions and testing (Osipian, 2008, 2017). Hladchenko, Dobbins and Jungblutd's, (2018) demonstrate how 'favouritism has also shaped the institutional architecture of Ukrainian HE and research to the benefit of powerful actors'. They argue that 'the politics of ''status enhancement'' and favouritism has resulted in a situation in which organizational forms are largely decoupled from their endowed tasks and thus impede fundamental reform and the alignment with western HE models'. In other words, it is no accident that the higher education system has been hijacked to serve the interests of the few at the expense of the wellbeing of the majority.

We propose that these types of behaviours of formal leaders can be described as a collective dysfunction. Similarly to alcoholism or drug addiction, such 'dysfunctional behaviours sometimes come to symbolize a traumatic group experience' (Cooper, 2017). The propagation of such dynamics through the layers of the system contributes yet another layer to the transformational trap.

And what of Critical Critical Thinking?

Up until 1990s, Ukraine was a neglected nation (Reid, 1997). And yet the contemporary crisis in higher education and elsewhere in the public sector has drawn a lot of attention from the outside world. Is it possible that the crisis in higher education reforms and in thinking about the reform process is a wakeup call to both Ukrainians and the outside world? Perhaps, the complex dynamics in the higher education sector are a starting point for a re-introduction of Ukraine to the West, re-introduction of the nation that has undergone centuries of oppression and the more recent experiences of the collective trauma and yet managed to survive despite it and surprise the world with its very emergence out of the Soviet blur in 1991 (Wilson, 2015). Whilst Ukrainians' fear of challenging authority and possible denial of such fears is likely to play a role in sustaining the dysfunctional processes and reinforcing the transformational trap in higher education (Argyris, 2010), it also offers an opportunity to reconsider the role of critical thinking in sustaining but also resolving some of these dysfunctional dynamics. As Argyris (2010) points out, traps are not uncommon in even the

most successful organisations in the most stable of contexts. Can the world learn from Ukrainian experience and those of other national contexts that experienced the collective trauma?

Cooper (2017: x) proposes an explanations grounded in the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979 cited in Copper, 2017) of how dysfunctional group dynamics may be maintained by both the in group and out group. Victimised populations may be more likely to experience collective dysfunction when '(a) a dysfunctional group behaviour is perceived to symbolize their collective trauma, and (b) the group's collective trauma(s) is denied by powerful outgroups'. How much awareness do Ukrainian leaders at various levels have about their intergenerational trauma experience and how it influences their decision in the present? Without understanding of the legacy they have inherited and cultivating self and other-compassion, they are would be unable to gain clarity around their shadow motivations and/or to resolve an internal conflict of wanting to move forward with the changes or to stay within the arguable safety of the status quo. How much awareness do Western leaders and leader developers have of the effects of the traumatic past and its influence on the present? Do they understand the implications of working with a society whose experience has been of subjugation and which often fell in between the cracks of political power play and interests of more powerful nations, including those who today comprise the European Union? Do they possess emotional awareness and sensitivity to engage with such traumatised populations with judgement? Insufficient understanding by the Western analysts and donors may be contributing an additional layer to the transformational trap. By not explicitly acknowledging the trauma and its consequences, the exercise of critical thinking (and in particular in the form of critical judgement (Davies, 2015) towards higher education by the outsiders, may take on a destructive turn and be perceived by Ukrainians as an attempt at shaming, thus once again triggering the feelings of ethnocentric shame inherited from the Genocide (Bezo and Maggie, 2015).

Moreover, addressing traumatic experiences in Ukraine and elsewhere needs to become an integral part of any developmental efforts whether they are driven internally or from the outside. In addition to critical observations of dysfunctional behaviours, there has to be an acknowledgement of complex emotional structures that are likely to underpin them. Goltz (2018:426) advocates for an approach to change where emotions and discomforts are recognised and owned. Drawing on the aspects of Buddhism and approaches from Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, she argues for an approach that places 'an emphasis on contact with reality even when it is uncomfortable, doing so with acceptance and

nonjudgment, and moving toward valued actions in the presence of discomfort.' Suspending critical judgement so characteristic of academic and policy documents may be a key to allowing for the emergence of trauma informed understanding. Such newly found understanding tapping into the psychological resilience that co-exists with vulnerability in traumatised populations (Chan, 2007) is likely to change ways in which critical arguments are formulated and critical dispositions and attitudes are developed. It opens pathways for cultivating compassion and kindness without giving up the rigor of critical thinking. Even in the presence of fear of authority and ethnocentric shame, such approaches may lead to healing of the historical wounds and subsequent critical action capable of overcoming various elements of the trap. As atrocious as it was, Holodomor has also become a commemoration of the resilience of the Ukraine people and Ukraine' independence is celebration of survival. Gradual de-layering of traumatic defences would unlock the national potential for creativity and continuous cultivation of the nation's potential for self-governance. Critical creativity in the presence of an open trauma-sensitive dialogue would open up alternative pathways for accommodating competing values and reconciliation of the past losses in the view of moving onto an alternative, previously un-envisioned futures where higher education system and the rest of the society would progress and flourish.

References

Applebaum, A. (2017). *How Stalin Hid Ukraine's Famine From the World*, The Atlantic. Available at: https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/10/red-famine-anne-applebaum-ukraine-soviet-union/542610/

Applebaum, A. (2018) *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine*, Penguin.

Argyris, C. (2010). Organizational Traps: Leadership, Culture, Organizational Design. Oxford University Press.

Bezo, B. and Maggie, S. (2015). Living in "survival mode:" Intergenerational transmission of trauma from the Holodomor genocide of 1932-1933 in Ukraine, *Social Science and Medicine*, 87-94.

Bowen. E.A. and E.S. Murshid, (2016). Trauma-Informed Social Policy: A Conceptual Framework for Policy Analysis and Advocacy. *American Journal of Public Health,* 106(2):223-9.

Chang, K. (2017). Living with Vulnerability and Resiliency: The Psychological Experience of Collective Trauma, *Acta Psychopathologica,* 3(53), 1-5.

Cooper, M. (2017). *Group Identity and Collective Dysfunction*. Thesis submitted to McGill University in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of Psychology, McGill University, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Darvas, P. (2003). Ukraine Education Reform Policy Note. Available at: http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/348821468313765642/pdf/470310ESW0whit1ote0Feb200301PUBLIC1.pdf.

Davies, M. (2015). A Model of Critical Thinking in Higher Education. In *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research.* Ed. M.B. Paulsen (ed.), 41-93. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Democratic Initiatives Foundation. (2015). *Survey of Rectors Results*. Available at: www.dif.org.ua. [Accessed 23 Nov 2018].

Denisova-Schmidt, E., Prytula, Y., Rumyantseva, N. (2018). Beg, borrow, or steal: determinants of student academic misconduct in Ukrainian higher education. *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*, 1-24.

Educational Policy (2015). The editorial board of the portal "Educational Policy" about the successes of Ukraine in the Bologna Process by the materials "*The European Higher Education Area in 2015: Implementation Report Bologna Process*". Available at: http://education-ua.org/ua/analytics/429-the-european-higher-education-area-in-2015-implementation-report-bologna-proces

Elias, B., Mignone, J., Hall, M., Hong, S.P., Hart, L., Sareen, J. (2012). Trauma and suicide behaviour histories among a Canadian indigenous population: an empirical

exploration of the potential role of Canada's residential school system. *Social Science and Medicine*, 74(10), 1560-1569.

Evans-Campbell, T. (2008). Historical trauma in American Indian/Native Alaska communities: a multilevel framework for exploring impacts on individuals, families, and communities. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence,* 23 (3), 316-338.

Fedinec, C. and I. Csermocsko, (2017). (Re)conceptualization of Memory in Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity, *Central European Papers*, 1, 46-71.

Fimyar, O. (2014).What is policy? In search of frameworks and definitions for non-Western contexts, *Educate,* 14(3), 6-21.

Fimyar, O. (2008). Educational policy-making in post-communist Ukraine as an example of emerging governmentality: Discourse analysis of curriculum choice and assessment policy documents (1999–2003), *Journal of Education Policy*, 23(6), 571–593.

Fimyar, O. (2010). Policy Why(s): Policy Rationalities and the Changing Logic of Educational Reform in Post-communist Ukraine. Post-Socialism is not Dead: (Re)Reading the Global in Comparative Education. *International Perspectives on Education and Society,* 14, 61–91.

Grycak, Y. (2015). *Kudy Ruhaetsya Svit (Where is the world going?),* Publisher: Grani-T.

Janmaat, J. G. (2008). Nation Building, Democratization and Globalization as Competing Priorities in Ukraine's Education System, *Nationalities Papers*, 36 (1), 1-23.

Karenian, H., Livaditis, M., Karenian, S., Zafiriadis, K., Bochtsou, V., Xenitidis, K. (2010). Collective trauma transmission and traumatic reactions among descendants of Armenian refugees. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry,* 57 (4), 327-337.

Klid, B. and Motyl, A.J. (2012). *The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine* of *1932-1933 in Ukraine*. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press.

Kovacs, K. (2014). The Bologna Process in Ukraine. In The Bologna Process in Central and Eastern Europe. Eds. Kozma, T., M. Rebay, A. Ohidy and E. Szolar. Germany: Springer Fachmedein Wiesbaden.

Kovryga, O. and Nickel, P.M. (2004). The Inevitability of Enduring Historical and Cultural Patterns: the Paradox of Decentralisation Efforts in Ukraine. *Administrative Theory and Practice,* 26(4), 609-634.

Levine, P. (2015). *Trauma and Memory. Brain and Body in a search for the Living Past.* Berkley, California: North Atlantic Books.

Major, E.F. (1996). The impact of the Holocaust on the second generation: Norwegian Jewish Holocaust survivors and their children, *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 9 (3), 441-454.

Najarian, M. (2018). *U.S. Senate Says Stalin 'Committed Genocide' In Famine-Hit Ukraine*, RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty. Available at https://www.rferl.org/a/u-s-senate-passes-resolution-on-ukraine-famine-a-move-hailed-by-kyiv/29526188.html [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

Oleksiyenko A. (2016). Higher Education Reforms and Center-Periphery Dilemmas: Ukrainian Universities Between Neo-Soviet and Neo-Liberal Contestations. In: Zajda J., Rust V. (eds) *Globalisation and Higher Education Reforms*. *Globalisation, Comparative Education and Policy Research*, 15, 133-148, Switzerland: Springer.

OSI & NEPC. (2006). Education in a hidden marketplace: Monitoring of private tutoring. *Overview and Country Reports*. New York: Open Society Institute.

Osipian, A. (2010). Corruption in the politicized university: Lessons from Ukraine's 2010 presidential elections, *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, (23)2, 101–114.

Osipian, A. (2008). Transforming University Governance in Ukraine: Collegiums, Bureaucracies, and Political Institutions. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive Paper,* No. 11058. Available at: http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/11058. [Accessed on 3 Oct. 2015]

Osipian, A. (2017). University autonomy in Ukraine: higher education corruption and the state, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies,* 50(3), 233–243.

Ravinet, P. (2008), From Voluntary Participation to Monitored Coordination: why European countries feel increasingly bound by their commitment to the Bologna Process. *European Journal of Education*, 43 (353-367).

Reid, A. (1997). *Borderland: A Journey Through the History of Ukraine*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Riabchuk, M. (2007). *Ambivalance or ambiguity?: Why Ukraine is disrupted between East and West.* In: S. Velychenko (Ed.), Ukraine, the EU and Russia: History, culture and international relations, studies in central and Eastern Europe, 70–89, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rowland-Klein, D., Dunlop, R. (1997). The transmission of trauma across generations: identification with parental trauma of Holocaust survivors. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry,* 31, 358-369.

Rumyantseva, N. and Logvynenko, O. (2017). Ukraine: Higher education reforms and dynamics of the institutional landscape. Chapter 16, In: Huisman, J., Smolentseva, A., Froumin, I. (Eds), *25 Years of Transformations of Higher Education Systems in Post-Soviet Countries*, 407-433, Palgrave Macmillan.

Semiv, L. and Hvozdovych, Y. (2012). The intellectual migration of the youth in Ukraine: the backgrounds for ‘brain circulation’, *Journal of International Studies,* 5(2), 72-81.

Shaw, M. (2013). Flawed Implementation or Inconsistent Logics? Lessons from Higher Education Reform in Ukraine. *European Education*, 45, 7-24.

Shaw, M., Chapman, D., and Rumyantseva, N. (2013). Organizational culture in the adoption of the Bologna process: a study of academic staff at a Ukrainian university. *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(7), 989–1003.

Shevchenko, V. (2018). The reform of the higher education of Ukraine in the conditions of the military-political crisis. *International Journal of Educational Development*, Online First.

Somasundaram, D. (2007). Collective trauma in northern Sri Lanka: a qualitative psychosocial-ecological study, *International Journal of Mental Health Systems,* 1(5) , 1-29.

Goltz, M. S. (2018). Organizational change: insights from Buddhism and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, 15(5), 424-449.

Sotero, M. (2006). A Conceptual Model of Historical Trauma:
Implications for Public Health Practice and Research, Journal of Health Disparities Research and Practice, 1(1), 93–108.

Subtelny, O. (2009). *Ukraine: A History*, (4th ed), Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

UNDP. (2018). *Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update*. Briefing note for countries on the 2018 Statistical Update. Ukraine.

World Bank. (2004). *Ukraine-Equal access to quality education in Ukraine project*, Project Information Document, Concept Stage, Available at: http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/919361468760561499/pdf/Project0Inform1ment010Concept0Stage.pdf

World Bank. (2005). *Ukraine-Education reform project.* Project Appraisal Document (p. 138). Available at:
http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/334131468316160160/pdf/32175.pdf

World Economic Forum. (2011). *World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report 2011-2012.* Geneva, Switzerland.

Yershova, O. and Gordiichuk, A. (2013) University Autonomy in Ukraine: International Experience and National Interests. *American Journal of Educational Research,* 1(11), 472-476.