

Institution: University of Essex		
Unit of Assessment: 21		
Title of case study: Improving the Lives of Involuntarily Dislocated Persons across Europe, Asia, the Americas and Australasia through the adoption of a unique and innovative framework		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2000- 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Renos K Papadopoulos	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor; Director: Centre for Trauma, Asylum & Refugees	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 1995 to present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2013-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Based on his Essex research, Papadopoulos developed a unique approach (termed Synergic Therapeutic Complexity- STC) to working with Involuntary Dislocated (ID) persons (from political violence, disasters or marginalisation), which enables a collaborative and empowering engagement between beneficiaries and caregivers. This research and its application through extensive engagement with governments and organisations that work with ID persons, has led to improved integration of refugees in host countries, influenced government policies, defined best practice for the United Nations (UN), and directly changed working practices of organisations and professional bodies. His unique methodological approach has been adopted by 19 organisations in 12 countries throughout the world, from Greece to countries of the Pacific Rim, Costa Rica, Mexico, USA and the UK, benefitting over 67,700 refugees and ID persons.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The underpinning research [R1-R8] consists of publications forming a comprehensive and innovative framework (the Synergic Therapeutic Complexity approach, STC), which has been key to informing all of Professor Papadopoulos' impact activities. In 2019 a formal Training Manual of STC was published in English, Greek and Spanish [R6].</p> <p>Exposure to adversity creates multiple pressures including those arising from the emotional nature of the situations and those concerning the servicing of pressing needs. These impede the <i>processing</i> of the experiences, leading to oversimplification and polarisation of the perception of all the relevant phenomena, their causes and consequences. Papadopoulos' unique STC approach emphasises the need for <i>epistemological</i> astuteness to discern all the relevant phenomena with the least possible distortions. Specifically, it differentiates between <i>events</i> and the <i>experience</i> of the events, and between being a <i>victim</i> of circumstances and developing a <i>victim identity</i>.</p> <p>The term <i>Involuntary Dislocation</i> (ID) is used to grasp the key experiences in these contexts (including migrants and refugees). The concept and image of <i>home</i> is central in ID. It is defined by the research as the interactional systemic hub of <i>time</i>, <i>space</i> and <i>relationships</i> (<i>space</i> is not limited to geographical space but also incorporates cultural, linguistic and spiritual conceptions; and <i>relationships</i> also with objects, ideas, narratives, etc.). People do not have one <i>home</i> but multiple <i>homes</i>, each one being context related. The <i>dimension</i> of '<i>homeness</i>' refers to the degree of strength of the sense of <i>home</i>.</p> <p><i>Identity</i> is formulated in the research as the unique fit between two sets of elements: those that are <i>intentionally perceptible</i> (e.g. age, gender, attitudes) and those clusters that constitute the <i>mosaic substrate</i> of identity, i.e. those elements that are taken for granted and not considered as relevant (e.g. sense perceptions, routines, rituals). The unique fit between the two sets creates the dynamic</p>		

sense of the relationship between the totality of oneself and the totality of one's perceptible environment (*Umwelt*), which Papadopoulos influentially conceptualises as *onto-ecological settledness*. This produces the sense of familiarity and predictability. During ID, *onto-ecological settledness* becomes destabilised, producing a unique sense of discomfort and disorientation, which he terms *nostalgic disorientation (ND)*. Papadopoulos' research identifies a crucial distinction between ND and usual psychological and psychiatric trauma.

Developed as a means to mobilise these concepts into more practice-oriented settings, the *Adversity Grid* is a framework that enables us to appreciate the range of responses to adversity, categorised as: (a) negative responses (suffering, disorientation, etc.) and (b) positive developments that were activated by the very exposure to adversity (*Adversity-Activated Development -- AAD*), whilst also accommodating (c) affected persons' existing strengths (*resilience*) retained from before their exposure to adversity. Moreover, the Grid differentiates between three degrees of severity within the negative effects (i) psychiatric disorders, (ii) distressful psychological symptoms and (iii) 'Ordinary Human Suffering'. This research-informed Adversity Grid enables workers to counteract oversimplification and polarisation in their responses, while avoiding 'confusing complexity' by promoting 'discerning complexity', ultimately empowering their beneficiaries by activating their retained and new strengths, in a therapeutic way. Use of this framework has been shown to reduce caregivers' burnout because (a) they are not burdened by the pressures of repairing their 'damaged' beneficiaries but (b) they appreciate the beneficiaries' resilience and AAD as well as the resilience and AAD of their own.

3. References to the research [can be supplied by the HEI on request]

- [R1] Papadopoulos, R.K. (2007). Refugees, Trauma and Adversity-Activated Development. *European Journal of Psychotherapy and Counselling*, 9 (3), September, 301-312. DOI:10.1080/13642530701496930
- [R2] Papadopoulos, R.K. (2015). Failure and Success in Forms of Involuntary Dislocation: Trauma, Resilience, and Adversity-Activated Development. In Wirtz, U. et al (Eds) '*The Crucible of Failure*'. Jungian Odyssey Series, Vol. VII, pp. 25-49. ISBN:978-1-935528-71-5
- [R3] Papadopoulos, R.K. (2018). Home: Paradoxes, complexities, and vital dynamism. In Bahun, S., & Petrić, B. (Eds.). *Thinking Home: Interdisciplinary Dialogues*. London: Bloomsbury. DOI:10.4324/9781003087212-5
- [R4] Papadopoulos, R.K. (2018). Trauma and Umwelt. An Archetypal Framework for Humanitarian Interventions. In A. Maercker, A., Heim, E. & Kirmayer, L.J. (Eds.). *Cultural Clinical Psychology and PTSD*. Göttingen: Hogrefe. ISBN:978-0889374973
- [R5] Papadopoulos, R.K. and Gionakis, N. (2018). The Neglected Complexities of Refugee Fathers. *Psychotherapy and Politics International*. Vol. 16 no. 1. DOI:10.1002/ppi.1438
- [R6] Papadopoulos, R.K. (2019) *Psychosocial dimensions of the refugee condition. The framework of Synergic Therapeutic Complexity. Handbook for professionals working with refugees*. Athens: Babel. In Greek, Spanish and English. (Available upon request).
- [R7] Papadopoulos, R.K. (2020) The Traumatizing Discourse of Trauma and Moral Injury. Distress and Renewal. In *Moral Injury and Beyond: Understanding Human Anguish and Healing Traumatic Wounds*, edited by Renos K Papadopoulos. London and New York: Routledge. ISBN: 9781138714564
- [R8] Papadopoulos, R.K. (March 2021, delayed publication). *Involuntary Dislocation. Home, Trauma, Resilience and Adversity-Activated Development*. London and New York: Routledge ISBN: 9780415682787 [delayed publication].
- [G1] Papadopoulos, R.K. Prometheus II – Strengthening the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims in Greece. European Commission. April 2015 to September 2016 £10,244

4. Details of the impact

Refugees, migrants and those who involuntarily have to abandon the spaces they consider their homes are exposed to various forms of adversity that affect them in many ways. Papadopoulos'

research [R1-R8] has developed a clear conceptualisation of the relevant phenomena, responses and processes that arise from adversity so that the resulting consequences can be effectively addressed, bringing clarity to a highly contested field of political debate. Papadopoulos' research has developed and refined the framework of STC [R6]. Through collaboration with governments and organisations that work directly with ID persons, professional standards have changed, and organisations have adopted his approach. By providing a comprehensive framework which appropriately conceptualises the consequences of adversity, STC has altered the overall *policy orientation* of the organisations, and their thinking and practices.

Defining global best practice

Responding to the dramatic increase of refugees and asylum seekers travelling to Europe the British Psychological Society (BPS) published guidance for psychologists working with ID persons in 2018 [S1]. This draws specifically on Papadopoulos' conceptualisation of STC within its assessments and interventions, serving as a practical means to ensure professionals working with these vulnerable populations improve the lives of individuals and communities that have been affected by such crises. Promoted for use in the UK and abroad it is used by frontline psychologists, those working in the field, and practitioners in related disciplines [S1]. For nearly two decades the UN International Organization for Migration (IOM), the leading body providing mental health and psychosocial support to migrants and host communities, have used an adaptation of Papadopoulos' formulation of STC as a dedicated model for their community based approach to Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) [S2]. Papadopoulos continues to advise the IOM and was on the Steering Committee of its Global Mental Health, Psychosocial Response and Intercultural Communication section between 2017 and 2019 [S2]. His research [R1-8] is the dominant concept and model that forms the basis of the IOM MHPSS manual published in 2019, guiding programmes dedicated to improving the availability and quality of psychosocial support in the practical implementation of their activities with a community-based approach in over 45 countries worldwide. [S2]

Changing international policy

Papadopoulos' research [R1-R8] led to direct changes in policy at the Hellenic Ministry of Health which deals with Greece's psychosocial response to emergencies and crises. Between February 2016 and July 2017, he was on the official Task Force of 19 Mental Health professionals advising the Permanent Secretary on the psychosocial dimensions and response to mass adversities such as the 'refugee crisis'. The Task Force's final report was adopted by the Ministry of Health and informed all activities in this area. The then Permanent Secretary states: *'Papadopoulos' invaluable and unique contribution, based on his specific approach of 'STC', consisted in his essential contribution to the provision of the framework of the report, according to which the predicament of the affected groups of people was not pathologized but understood in terms of its complexity. Including not only the negative effects of adversity...but also their strengths (old and new) ...his 'Adversity grid' occupied a central position in the...policy.'* [S3]

Changing practices

Working with organisations in Europe, South America, North America, Asia and Australasia Papadopoulos has improved the way that ID persons and those who experience trauma are treated. By offering a cluster of research-informed supervisions, consultations, training and evaluation services Papadopoulos has introduced STC to practitioners who have adopted and embedded his research in their professional practices, including in:

Greece: Babel Day Centre, a public mental health unit, financed by the Greek Ministry of Health, supporting immigrants and refugees nationwide, has collaborated with Papadopoulos since 2013. Papadopoulos delivers face to face supervisions, consultations and offers virtual support to over 110 practitioners and volunteers yearly. Papadopoulos' theoretical approach is central to Babel's philosophy and practice [S4]. Data from practitioners in Greece (2018) estimate that over 6,000 ID persons benefitted from the STC approach [S4a]. The director of Babel states: *'... when the refugee crisis expanded, and more than 1,000,000 people came to Greece from Turkey... Papadopoulos' contribution to the management of the crisis... was crucial... Babel staff started visiting the islands and camps all over Greece, separately or in the framework of different projects, to deliver training and supervision to people at the front line, based on Papadopoulos'*

approach...Papadopoulos' work has been decisive on the way Babel operates. The therapeutic approach we follow (and train others to follow) is based on Papadopoulos' 'adversity grid'. [S4a]

Korea, Japan, Australia, the Philippines, Canada, Mexico, and USA: In 2018 Papadopoulos introduced STC to professionals working therapeutically with adversity survivors in American and Asian humanitarian organisations in the fields of nursing, psychology, social work, family therapy, chaplaincy, midwifery and medicine. Building on [R1-R8] Papadopoulos developed a specific programme for caregivers along with newly developed instruments for the assessment of adversity survivors that has been instituted into practice. Papadopoulos trained 50 key leaders in the mental health professions to serve as regional trainers in STC for other members of their community. Since 2018 these trainers trained over 2,000 others, enabling his framework to help an estimated 25,000 adversity survivors in the countries of the Pacific Rim. The key leaders included professionals from Hiroshima City Hospital, American Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross, John Hopkins University School of Nursing, Antiochian House of Studies, United States Coast Guard, United States Navy, Project Mexico, United States Forest Service, and Boise State University Health Services [S5]. Therapeutic practices were amended following the project and testimonials show how STC was adopted. The American Red Cross state: *"These trainings were unlike any educational opportunities in the field that our members have had before, as they undergirded our policies and techniques with a strong philosophical foundation. Since the training our members continue to discuss its impact, and the primary principles that we now share, and it has become a part of the way we see our work."* [S5]

Enabling more effective integration of refugees into host countries

Through ongoing collaboration with NGOs, Refugee Councils and Asylum Services Papadopoulos' research has led to improved integration of refugees into their host communities:

Greece: In October 2014 Papadopoulos worked with the Greek Council for Refugees, Babel Day Centre and Médecins sans Frontiers to establish 'Prometheus II' [G1], to support migrants and refugees who have been subjected to violence [S6]. By establishing a team of experts dealing with medical, mental health, legal and social work matters alongside interpreters, this holistic approach, based on [R1-R8], allowed the early identification of vulnerable asylum seekers who had been victims of torture, enabling more effective treatment. In 2017 the project was recognised for its best practice by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles [S6a]. The Prometheus Project Director states: *"[following STC]...we conceptualise things differently and we work differently...Of particular importance is what we learned about how to work with people who have experiences of torture...An important component of this project is provision of training to other professionals all over Greece on how to approach Survivors of Torture using Papadopoulos' theoretical framework."*[S4a]. From 2017-2019 Papadopoulos introduced STC to the Greek Asylum Service training interviewing officers, social workers and lawyers who support asylum seekers throughout the process. STC was subsequently adopted across the service. The Asylum Service of the Hellenic Republic confirm: *"[Papadopoulos'] contribution was invaluable because it changed the style and approach of the Asylum Service, making it more sensitive to the psychosocial complexities of the asylum seekers and, thus, improving substantially the very asylum process"*. [S7]. Since 2015 Papadopoulos has worked directly with the NGO Lesvos Solidarity who support the most vulnerable refugees and survivors of shipwrecks housed in the PIKPA informal camp. The Chair of Lesvos Solidarity states: *"Papadopoulos contributed decisively to the formation of our organisations policy and modus operandi in our work with refugees...our operational style changed dramatically as we became aware of the need to bear in mind the whole spectrum of consequences when people are exposed to adversities, to avoid victimisation, to promote resilience and adversity activated development."* [S8]

Costa Rica: In 2018 Papadopoulos introduced STC to a consortium assigned by the government to address the increasing numbers of refugees and migrants in Costa Rica. The Jesuit Migration Service (JMS) adopted his framework to promote self-reliance, self-worth and autonomy among asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. Since 2018 approximately 700 people have benefitted from this approach across San Jose and the remote communities in northern Costa Rica. The JMS state: *"...[STC] has opened a new perspective on how our organization can conduct more comprehensive and dignified interventions with asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, by going beyond assessing vulnerability and victimisation, to identifying the retain[ed] strengths and*

resilience, as well as the new strengths these persons developed as a result of their displacement adversities...This approach has become fundamental to JMS-CR's daily work." [S9]

Responding to Covid-19

Papadopoulos has worked with organisations to address psychosocial issues relating to the pandemic, including:

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), USA: This international NGO approached Papadopoulos to train staff in the principles of STC [R1-R8]. Papadopoulos has collaborated with the IOCC since the Covid-19 outbreak developing specific resources based on his unique approach for the Frontliners, a highly trained crisis response team and experienced Orthodox clergy providing emotional and spiritual care in emergency situations. The Executive Director states that adopting Papadopoulos' framework has led to: *"an increase in awareness and practice of the emotional and spiritual care under chronic situations like pandemics."* [S10]

National Health Service (NHS), UK: The Covid-19 pandemic has put health care professionals under extreme pressure, the impact on the mental health and wellbeing of NHS workers must not be underestimated. Papadopoulos introduced STC to four NHS trusts (East London, Central & Northwest London, Devon Partnerships and Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trusts) through online seminars in Summer 2020. The framework continues to be used by practitioners as the East London NHS Foundation Trust confirm regarding their large scale covid-19 staff impact study: *"The key aspect...is the concept of "Adversity Activated Development", developed by Papadopoulos; the longitudinal study is unique and explores for the first time a range of responses to the pandemic among front line health care staff ... including clinicians from mental health, primary care, and community health care organisations...The results of the study will inform NHS trusts in their staff safety and wellbeing programmes, establish risk as well as significant protective factors across staff on the basis of the reflective adversity grid tool..."*[S11]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- [S1] BPS Guidelines for psychologists working with refugees and asylum seekers in the UK, 2018
- [S2] UN IOM Manual on community-based mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies and displacement, 2019 (page 21)
- [S3] Testimonial from the Permanent Secretary, Greek Hellenic Ministry of Health
- [S4] Testimonial from Director of Babel Day Centre (Letters 2018, 2020). An organisation working nationally with the large numbers of refugees arriving in Greece
- [S4a] Babel Day Centre – Our Philosophy (screenshot)
- [S5] Collated feedback from the countries in the Pacific Rim including Canadian Red Cross, United States Navy, Hiroshima City Hospital
- [S6] Prometheus II website – Our Story (screenshot). A collaborative organisation working with survivors of torture and refugees in Greece
- [S6a] European Council on Refugees and Exiles, Time for Needs Report, 2017 (page 117)
- [S7] Testimonial from the Head of Public Relations Office the Greek Asylum Service
- [S8] Testimonial, Chair of Lesvos Solidarity NGO, based in the Lesvos PIKPA refugee camp
- [S9] Testimonial, Technical Advisor, Jesuit Migration Service, Costa Rica. Leading a consortium response to the refugee crisis in Costa Rica.
- [S10] Testimonial, Executive Director, International Orthodox Christian Charities, USA who provide support to survivors of adversity and trauma.
- [S11] Testimonial, Chief Executive, East London NHS Foundation Trust