

Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees

Activities January - December 2012

December 2012

Between 11 and 15 December, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Libya as consultant to the International Organisation for Migration. The main purpose of his visit was to continue the first training he offered in September on Psychosocial Assistance for Crisis Affected Children, Youth and their Families in Libya as part of the IOM project Psychosocial Response in War Torn Societies that is funded by the Italian Development Cooperation. The training to 35 members of staff from various organisations and services from seven different cities and towns all over the country was offered in conjunction with the University of Tripoli on its campus and was attended again by the Deputy Minister of Social Welfare as well as by several University professors (including the Head of the Department of Psychology).

November 2012

On Thursday 29 November, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Dublin. He offered another day training workshop to staff of SPIRASI, a humanitarian, intercultural, non-governmental organisation that works with asylum seekers, refugees and other disadvantaged migrant groups, with special concern for survivors of torture.

Refugee Care students visit the Hatton Cross Asylum and Immigration Tribunal Court



On November 21st, students from the MA / PhD in Refugee Care had the unique opportunity to visit the Hatton Cross Asylum and Immigration Tribunal Court accompanied by Professor Renos Papadopoulos who had organized the visit. The main purpose of the visit was to attend and observe the court proceedings presided by Judge Kyrie James. The students had the privilege to witness how appellants and respondents pleaded their argument as well as how Judge James conducted each hearing. In all of these cases, the appellants were appealing the rejection of their application to stay in the UK by the UK Border Agency, and argued for the right to remain in this country. Throughout each of the proceedings, students took notes and wrote questions regarding their observations. During the midday break, they were invited to join the judges for lunch in the Judges Mess and had the opportunity to engage in informal conversation all the judges. According to the plan of the day, during this lunch-break, Professor Renos Papadopoulos gave a brief presentation about the challenges expert witnesses face in writing reports for asylum cases; his presentation was followed by a lively discussion with the judges. In the afternoon, at the end of all the hearings, the students were received for a question and answer session by Judge James and Senior Judge Conway. This

informal meeting elucidated the various types of cases judges encounter and their usual dilemmas; also, it helped to illustrate the balance judges must maintain between upholding the law and being compassionate and humane, when working within the asylum and immigration division of the judicial system. Finally, the last item of the day programme was another question and answer session with Judge James who generously and patiently explained her actions and rulings for each case. This overall experience gave the students the exceptional chance to think as if they were part of the jurisprudence system. This exposure allowed them to develop a unique insight into the multiplicity of factors involved in such hearings and to deepen their grasp of the refugee field, especially their understanding of how the system works as a whole.

Nicole Phelps, MA Refugee Care.

On Saturday, 17 November, **Renos Papadopoulos** offered a day webinar on 'Narrative and Family Approaches to Working with Trauma Survivors' for the 'Istanbul Trauma Studies Program' that is organised jointly by the Psychology Department of the Istanbul Bigli University and the 'International Trauma Studies Program' of the Columbia University of New York. The webinar was attended by 57 trainees all of them professionals working in the field of trauma in different contexts, e.g. refugees, survivors of torture, sexual abuse, domestic violence, trafficking, natural disasters, etc.

On Thursday 1 November, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Dublin. He offered a day training workshop to staff of SPIRASI, a humanitarian, intercultural, non-governmental organisation that works with asylum seekers, refugees and other disadvantaged migrant groups, with special concern for survivors of torture.

October 2012

On Wednesday 24 October, **Renos Papadopoulos** was at the Refugee Council (RC) where he met with Angelina Jalonen, the Manager of the Therapeutic Casework Services, and they jointly developed a framework for potential collaboration that would include the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between CTAR and the RC, the placement of students from the MA/PhD in Refugee Care at the RC, joint research projects, assisting the RC with the development of a new therapeutic model, etc. In addition, he offered her consultation with regard to a specific case of a Sudanese refugee.

Between 13 and 20 October, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Sudan. As consultant of the 'War Trauma Foundation' (WTF), he offered a follow up training to the newly established 'Ahfad Trauma Treatment and Training Centre' (ATTTC) that is based at the Ahfad University for Women in Khartoum (Omdurman). The training was attended by 15 mental health professionals who are already engaged in work with trauma in various services and agencies covering most of Sudan. This training is part of an ongoing project between the ATTTC, the WTF and CTAR.

September 2012

Between 27 and 29 September, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Tripoli as consultant to the International Organisation for Migration. The main purpose of his visit was to offer training on "Psychosocial Assistance for Crisis Affected Children, Youth and their Families in Libya" as part of the IOM project 'Psychosocial Response in War Torn Societies' that is funded by the Italian Development Cooperation. The training to 35 members of staff from various organisations and services from seven different cities and towns all over the country was

offered in conjunction with the University of Tripoli on its campus and was attended by the Deputy Minister of Social Welfare as well as by several University professors (including the Head of the Department of Psychology).

On Saturday 22 September, **Renos Papadopoulos** offered two presentations. In the morning, he offered a half-day training to the trainees of the Association of Jungian Analysts on issues concerning severe trauma and on working in non-traditional settings, and in the afternoon, he was one of the keynote speakers of the day event on 'Making Connections' organised by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). The title of his presentation was 'Connecting Together: Meaning, Resilience and Adversity-Activated Development'.

August 2012

Between 21 August and 20 September, **Renos Papadopoulos** was working in Cyprus. The main areas of his work included the following:

- With the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), (a) he reviewed the progress of the project on bi-communal development with representatives of the Greek and Turkish civil society in Cyprus (following the activities in May in London at the House of Commons) and planned further initiatives, and (b) consulted to them in connection with using the 'Adversity Grid' in developing a pioneering new way to measure progress towards reconciliation, in the form of a Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index.
- With the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), he reviewed the developments (a) of the training he offered last December on working with tortured asylum seekers and planned a follow up training next year, and (b) of the drafting of the new Common European Asylum System (CEAS) that is currently taking place in Cyprus now that Cyprus holds the presidency of the European Union.
- With the European workgroup that now is drafting the CEAS in Cyprus, he continued his contribution towards the finalisation of this important document.
- With one of the candidates for President of the Republic of Cyprus at the forthcoming elections in February and his close associates, he consulted personally on issues of mental health and asylum policies.
- With the director of psychological services of the Ministry of Health, he discussed the development of a specific project of a family psychosocial community centre.
- With the Exarch of the Patriarchate of Alexandria in Cyprus (i.e. the ambassador in Cyprus of the Orthodox Church in Africa), he discussed the development of community psychosocial project in Mozambique (which they will initiate during a visit in January).
- With the directors of the Cyprus Think Tank Thucydides, he consulted on issues of mental health and asylum policies.
- With a senior member of staff of the Ombudsman's Office, he consulted on issues of asylum policy and psychosocial practice.
- With senior staff of the European University of Cyprus and of the University of Nicosia he discussed their requests for developing collaborative projects.

Between 12 and 19 August, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Colombia after an invitation by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to offer training and consultation in relation to psychosocial assistance to victims of political violence. His programme of activities included, inter alia:

- a three day training workshop on 'Psychosocial Dimensions in Reparation and Assistance to Victims of Violence' offered at Rosario University in Bogota to 134 participants who are actively working in this field;
- several consultation workshops with the director and senior staff of the Special Unit for the Integral Attention and Reparation of the Victims of Violence that was established at the beginning of this year to develop a comprehensive service to this group of people;
- consultations to the teachers of the course Developing psychosocial dimension within the victims assistance process that IOM will start offering this autumn to 400 civil servants;
- consultations to various sections of the IOM working in relevant fields, including research with ex combatant children; and
- meetings with staff of Rosario University and with the USAid office in Colombia.

One of the concrete impacts of Renos' work is that the official 'Registry of Victims' in Colombia is now going to be revised (according to the 'Adversity/Trauma Grid') so that it will provide a more holistic, humanising and three-dimensional profile of each victim that would include material about victims that would also acknowledge their strengths and abilities so that these can then be taken into active consideration in all assistance and interventions.

June 2012

On 29 June **Renos Papadopoulos** was the keynote speaker at a day event organised by the 'The Forgiveness Project' and 'St Ethelburgas Centre for Reconciliation and Peace' under the title "Stories that Heal - Stories that Harm. Working with personal and community narrative" and was held at the 'The London Inter Faith Centre'. In addition to his plenary presentation (entitled "Therapeutic Witnessing and Storied Communities: Trauma, Resilience, Adversity-Activated Development"), Renos also ran one of the workshops. The event was attended by over one hundred professionals.

On 28 June **Renos Papadopoulos** was the keynote speaker at the annual Conference of the 'Association for University and College Counselling' and his presentation was entitled 'Meaning-attribution processes: Trauma, resilience and adversity-activated development'. The conference, that was held at the University of Worcester, was attended by about 120 counsellors from all over the UK.

Between 20-24 June, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Pisa (Italy) offering training at the Summer School on 'Psychosocial Interventions in Emergency Displacement' that was co-organised by the University of Santa Anna and the International Organisation for Migration. Renos is one of the three co-directors of this unique two-week residential course that is offered annually; this year it was attended by thirty senior staff of international (mainly UN) organisations that are directly responsible for responding to emergency displacement. Participants came from all over the world, including Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Egypt, Indonesia, Israel, Ivory Coast, Finland, Georgia, Haiti, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, Macedonia, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Timor, The Netherlands, Philippines, Vietnam, Yemen.

May 2012

Between 23 - 27 May, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Athens as a guest of 'Babel', the only organisation in Greece that is responsible for the mental health of refugees. During his stay he offered training, consultation and supervision to 'Babel' staff as well as other collaborating

organisations, services and agencies. In addition, he was the main speaker at a half-a-day event (on 23 May, entitled 'People in Movement, Societies in Crisis: between Vulnerability and Resilience') that 'Babel' organised with other agencies at the 'Drakopoulos Amphitheatre' of the University of Athens, in the centre of the city. The event was attended by about 200 professionals and members of the public and it was extremely lively, addressing not only issues of refugees but also the multiplicity of consequences of the current economic crisis. Finally, Renos consulted to the central agency of the Ministry of Health and UNHCR that are responsible for the reception and accommodation of asylum seekers (with reference to their developing new guidelines that include ASPIS - from the EVASP project), as well as to the staff team of 'Mosaic', a specialist agency that works with refugees who are depended on substance abuse (with reference to future training courses).

Renos Papadopoulos was invited by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Conflict Issues to assist with the planning of an intervention in Cyprus, activating the Civil Society now that the official talks between the Greek and Turkish leaders came to an end, failing to find a solution to the Cyprus problem. Eight prominent members of the Cyprus Civil Society from both communities were brought to the UK and on 15 and 16 May there were several meetings in the House of Commons culminating in a large meeting that was attended by members from both Houses. Simon Hughes MP (who chaired the meeting) asked Renos to comment on the presentations of the visiting Cypriots before inviting participation from the floor. Another meeting took place at LSE on the 16 May that was open to the public and where some of the ideas developed at the House of Commons were presented and discussed. Renos was asked to remain centrally involved in this initiative.

Between 3 and 8 May, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Sudan. As consultant of the 'War Trauma Foundation' (WTF), he offered training to a new Centre ('The Ahfad Trauma Treatment and Training Centre') that will start operating as from July and will be based at the Ahfad University for Women in Khartoum (Omdurman). The training (with CTAR as co-organiser) was attended by 17 mental health professionals who are already engaged in work with trauma in various services and agencies covering most of Sudan. This training is part of an ongoing project between the new Trauma Centre, the WTF and CTAR.

April 2012

On 24 April **Renos Papadopoulos** was an invited speaker at the 'International Dialogue on Migration' (IDM), the flagship annual event of the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) held in Geneva. The title of this year's IDM was "Migration Consequences of Complex Crises" and was attended by senior diplomats from all 146 member states as well as representatives from most relevant international organisations, e.g. the World Bank, the European Union, The International Red Cross, etc. Renos spoke at the session on "Internal Displacement" and specifically on "Long-Term Measures and Cooperation Mechanisms" where he presented his approach to consultancies in this field.

On 25-26 April **Renos Papadopoulos** offered staff training to IOM and other relevant agencies and Government services in Dublin on the psychosocial dimensions of programmes of "Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration" (AVRR) of asylum seekers.

March 2012

Frank Rohricht and **Renos Papadopoulos** were in Cyprus (Frank from 26 March to 6 April and Renos from 23 March to 6 April) and together they were involved in the following:

1. In connection with the planning of the Cyprus National Health Service scheme, they met with two senior officials of the Ministry of Health, the director of mental health services (Dr Y. Kalakoutas) and the director of the psychological services (Dr K Kyranides).

2. They participated in the meetings to develop the Health Policy document of the Cyprus Think Tank “Thucydides” ; Renos is a founding member and Frank is an external consultant to this Think Tank.

3. Both were invited by to join the International Advisory Board of the “Cyprus Health Journal”

Frank was appointed Honorary Professor at the University of Nicosia and on 29 March gave his inaugural lecture at the new Medical School of the same University.

Renos was also involved with the following activities:

- He followed up the training he offered for the UNHCR on working with survivors of torture; the feedback has been extremely positive and further activities were considered

- He consulted to Kalliopi Kampanella a senior officer of the Office of Commissioner of Administration (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Cyprus and a member of the Cyprus committee assigned to lead the implementation of the long-awaited “Common European Asylum System” (CEAS). Cyprus is due to take over the rotating presidency of the European Union (between 1 July and 31 December 2012) and, inter alia, it is planned to implement CEAS.

- Was appointed consultant for psychosocial issues to the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church in Africa. More specifically, he met with the Head of the Orthodox Church in Africa (the Patriarch of Alexandria who was visiting Cyprus, at the time) and the permanent representative of the same Patriarchate in Cyprus and planned future activities in Africa in the field of psychosocial assistance.

On Wednesday 7 March, **Renos Papadopoulos** offered consultation/training/supervision to the Refugee Council at their headquarters in Brixton. The meeting was intended for the members of the Therapeutic Team (led by Angelina Jalonen) but was also attended by two of our students who are doing their placements at the Refugee Council. These were **Wendy Griffin** (a student of the MA in Refugee Care) and **Dena Alinejad** (a PhD student). One of the issues discussed was the use of ASPIS (the instrument developed by the EVASP project) to monitor and evaluate their services, as it is also done by the 'Freedom from Torture'.

February 2012

Between 16 and 19 February. **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Milan, as a guest of “*Terrenueove*” a specialist organisation (social cooperative) that works with refugees and organises training courses. During his visit, Renos offered a training event under the title 'Working with refugees: trauma, resilience and adversity-activated development'; he was the speaker at a public event sponsored by the Municipality of Milan, and offered consultation to the “*Terrenueove*” staff team of psychotherapists. The training event was part of the “*Terrenueove*” course “Displaced persons and refugees: reception and therapeutic relationships in the country of asylum” and was attended by 18 professionals from various disciplines working with refugees and migrants in various services in many parts of Italy. The

public event (entitled "Dilemmas in working with Refugees: a psychosocial perspective") was "*Terrenuove*" s" annual public lecture and was held in the hall of the Civic Aquarium in the centre of Milan. The lecture was preceded by an account by Dr. Giancarla Boreatti (the chief officer responsible for the Social Services department for Refugees and Immigrants of the *Comune di Milano*) about the approach and activities of her department. Access to the lecture was by advance application and the number of applications far exceeded the 130 seats available. The audience (who were professionals and other workers with refugees and migrants from northern Italy as well as members of the public) were given a list of Renos' publications in Italian as well as copies of four of his recent published articles.

On 8 February **Renos Papadopoulos** offered a seminar on 'Psychosocial dimensions of Human Rights' to the Masters students of Human Rights on the campus. About fifty students attended and there was a very engaging discussion about the relevance of this perspective to the theory and practice of Human Rights.

On 9 February, **Renos Papadopoulos** had another of his periodic half-day meetings with 10 senior staff of the 'Freedom from Torture' (FFT, previously 'Medical Foundation for the Treatment of Victims of Torture') at their London headquarters as part of his regular consultation to them. More specifically, FFT have been using ASPIS, the instrument Renos developed (in the EVASP project), as a way of monitoring their work and he assists them in adapting it to address increasingly more facets of their work, e.g. with families and groups.

January 2012

Between 26-27 January **Renos Papadopoulos** was an invited speaker at the Second National Conference of the Irish Council for Psychotherapy. The Conference, held in Dublin Castle, was opened by the Irish President Mr Michael D Higgins who, quite unexpectedly, praised Renos' work mentioning him by name twice during his brief opening address. Renos gave a lecture ('Trauma and beyond: a psychosocial approach to Resilience and Adversity-Activated Development') and a workshop ('Varieties of therapeutic inputs; using therapeutic principles in extraordinary contexts'). The reception was extremely positive and several services and organisations extended invitations to him to offer specialist training for them. The conference was attended by 170 psychotherapists from all Irish counties and from abroad. In addition, and independently from the Conference, Renos met with Theodora Suter, the Chief of Mission of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Ireland to finalise the plans for a two-day training module for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR), that Renos was invited to offer to IOM staff in Ireland later in the year.

Between 14 and 15 January, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in Italy where he was invited by "*EtnA*" (Etnopsigologia Analitica) to offer training to its members and in particular to 35 mental health professionals from the Puglia region that work with asylum seekers and refugees. The training was attended by over 60 professionals and it was held at the offices of AIPA (L'Associazione Italiana di Psicologia Analitica) in Rome.

Between 2 and 13 January, **Renos Papadopoulos** was in South Africa. During his visit he worked in Gugulethu and Khayelitsha, the African Townships near Cape Town, on the Nontsikelelo Arts Project mainly consulting to Ntombi Magantsela, the project director, and Evgenia Sofianos, a senior consultant to the project. In addition, he gave two lectures and had two relevant meetings: on 5 January he gave a public lecture on "*Psychology and Orthodoxy: complementary or contradictory?*"; the lecture was attended by over 60 mental health and other professionals as well as members of religious organisations and of the

general public. On 11 January he gave a presentation on “*Working with phenomena of unipolar archetypal manifestations in “traditional” • and “non-traditional” • settings*” at the Jung Centre in Cape Town that was organised by the South African Association of Jungian Analysts; the presentation was attended by a dozen Jungian analysts who are interested in developing expertise in working with these types of phenomena. On 11 January, he had a meeting with clinical psychologists involved in the training of clinical psychologists both at the University of Cape Town (Dr Debbie Kaminer and Dr Anastasia Maw) and the University of Western Cape (Dr Umesh Bawa) and explored together possibilities of collaborating with CTAR in community projects that would combine training components. On 13 January, Renos met with Miranda Madikane (director) and Daniele Boccalon (Welfare manager) of the Scalabrini Centre in Cape Town that offers a wide range of services to refugees, including trauma counselling and discussed possibilities of collaboration. Finally, Renos reconnected with Robyn Rowe, an alumna of the “MA in Refugee Care” who is now the “Trauma and Healing Coordinator” of the CWD (Catholic Welfare and Development) an organisation that (among other services) runs the only refugee shelter in Cape Town. Robyn is interested in continuing with her studies at our University doing a PhD based on the work she does with refugees in South Africa.
