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ABSTRACT FORM

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Title of the contribution/Titolo del contributo	THE NECESSITY FOR A CROSS- CULTURAL APPROACH TO THE REFUGEES PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING		
Objectives/Obiettivi	The organization of proper mental health services for the needs of the refugees and immigrants		

Contents-text/Contenuto-testo:

The all the more oppressive and suffocating enclosure of the refugees in Greece, with the painful experience of this all the more irreversible enclosure, mainly in the hotspots and the camps, having become their intolerable daily routine - a further traumatic experience that is added, and interacts, with all the multi-traumatic experiences that they already had, in their desperate effort to get away from the war and/or economic disasters (but also to traumatic experiences before displacement and emigration) - all this has contributed to the multiplication and the gravity of their consequences to their mental health.

Suicide attempts have become all the more frequent, the same as depression, the so called “post traumatic stress disorder”, self harassment, “reactive psychotic episodes”, while, at the same time, hospitalizations in psychiatric clinics, most of them involuntary, have grown geometrically, especially since the EU-Turkey agreement (March 2016), that put an end to any possibility for the refugees to continue their ‘trip’ to western and central Europe.

Various factors, such as the rejection to the most of the refugees of their request for asylum (or the so called “international protection”), the refusal of the most European countries to accept refugees through relocation (and in September to this two years program was ended), the all the more obstacles that are raised to the

reunification of families, together with the living conditions of extreme deprivation that are offered in the hotspots and the camps and with pending the threat of send them back to Turkey (considered by EU as “safe third country”) – a threat that, all the more, turns into a reality for hundreds of refugees- all these factors are the main, and, in most of the refugees, the exclusive cause of the refugees mental health problems.

The question is, if the existing mental health services are properly organized and with professionals properly trained, so that are able to really “hear’ and open passages of communication with a different culture. To approach the so called “psychopathology” not as a universal expression of abstract signs and symptoms that are summed up in the diagnostic categories of the officially recognized classification systems, but as an expression of human suffering in its particularity, that is inscribed in the particular cultural context of the subject and so to be able to give the most proper answers to the presented needs.

The need for a cross-cultural approach in psychiatry is urgent as never before.