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The Experience of the Afro-Colombian Communities of Robles

Elena P. Bastidas and Carlos A. Gonzales

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Critical Remembrance, Feminist Science and the Women of the Manhattan
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An Exploratory Study in Coexistence Building

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The Promise and Reality of Reconciliation in Croatia

Sara Parker

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SOCIAL CARTOGRAPHY AS A TOOL FOR CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE AFRO- COLOMBIAN COMMUNITY OF ROBLES

Elena P. Bastidas and Carlos A. Gonzalez

Abstract

The field of conflict resolution is in constant evolution. Every day, theories are defined and redefined, and new contributions are made to the field. This continuous process challenges scholars, researchers, and practitioners to develop new conceptual and methodological frameworks for the analysis of conflict. This article highlights the potential of social cartography (participatory mapping) as a tool for the transformation of environmental and social conflicts at the household, community, national, and international levels. The advantages of social cartography as an appraisal, planning, and analytical tool for conflict transformation are illustrated here with a case study of the Afro-Colombian community of Robles.

Conflict Analysis and Resolution Field

The field of conflict resolution has come a long way since the term first gained wide use in the 1950s. Throughout the decades, it has developed through the input of diverse disciplines, which in turn created the basis for controversy in its theory, research, and practice (Kriesberg, 1997, 2007; Burton, 1990). In current debates, scholars still advocate the recognition of conflict resolution as a distinct field of inter-/multi-disciplinary study. Consequently, there is a need to constantly challenge and reexamine concepts, knowledge, theories and assumptions with the goal of developing conceptual and methodological contributions (Sharoni, 1996; Miall, 2004). The field of conflict resolution covers diverse areas of study ranging from alternative dispute resolution, mediation, and peacebuilding studies, to international diplomacy. Therefore, it is not uncommon to experience conceptual change. In the words of John Lederach (1995, p. 17), “terminology that dominates a field or discipline evolves with the changing conceptual processes of its practitioners. Such is the case particularly in the area of conflict resolution”. Key concepts of conflict resolution are briefly defined below in order to provide a point of reference for the terms used throughout this paper.

Burton and Dukes (1990) differentiate between the terms “dispute” and “conflict” based on the time and issues in contention. According to these authors, *disputes* are disagreements that involve negotiable interests. Disputes are usually short-term, and satisfactory solutions for the parties involved can be reached most of the time. There are several methods used to settle these types of issues including mediation, negotiation or adjudication. In contrast, *conflicts* are characterized for involving non-negotiable issues, such as essential human needs, moral differences, or distributional issues regarding vital resources. Conflicts are generally long-term and tend to be more deeply-rooted than disputes.

Based on these definitions, environmental issues often fall into the category of conflicts rather than disputes. “Environmental conflicts manifest themselves as political, social, economic, ethnic, religious or territorial conflicts, or conflicts over resources or national interests ... They are traditional conflicts induced by environmental degradation” (Baechler, 1998, p. 1). Environmental degradation can manifest itself as overuse of renewable resources, pollution, or degradation of the living area.

Practitioners usually deal with environmental conflicts through three primary approaches: conflict resolution, conflict management, and conflict transformation. The conflict resolution approach is concerned with long-term conflict and seeks to find a solution that deals with the root causes of the conflict. A criticism of conflict resolution is that it implies that conflict is bad and therefore it should be ended (Lederach, 1995, p. 201; Burton, 1990, p. 5). Under the conflict management approach, conflict arises from existing differences of values, interests, and power among the parties involved. Resolving these types of conflicts is considered unrealistic. Therefore, the approach is to manage and contain them rather than deal with the real source of the problem. In the words of Bloomfield and Reilly (1998, p. 18):

Conflict management is the positive and constructive handling of difference and divergence. Rather than advocating methods for removing conflict, [it] addresses the more realistic question of managing conflict: how to deal with it in a constructive way, how to bring opposing sides together in a cooperative process, how to design a practical, achievable, cooperative system for the constructive management of difference.

The conflict transformation approach does not suggest the eradication or control of conflict; instead, it elaborates on the notion of conflict as a positive agent for social change (Reiman, 2004). In contrast to conflict resolution and conflict management approaches, conflict transformation reflects a better understanding of the nature of conflict itself. Conflict is seen as a natural occurrence between humans who are involved in relationships. Conflict

transforms the people, situations, and relationships that created the initial conflict (Lederach, 1995, p. 17). Conflict transformation in current peacebuilding practice seeks long-term peacebuilding efforts oriented to outcomes, processes, and structural changes. Its goal is to overcome conflict, transform unjust social relationships, and promote conditions that can help to create cooperative relationships. Conflict transformation, therefore, is a re-conceptualization of the field in an effort to increase its relevance to contemporary conflicts (Miall *et al.*, 1999, p. 21; Botes, 2003; Bigdon and Korf, 2004; Reimann, 2004). In this paper, the term *conflict resolution* is used as an umbrella phrase to address the field of study, and *conflict transformation* refers to one of the approaches used to deal with environmental and social conflict in developing countries.

A New Approach: Reversal of Realities

To move towards a conflict transformation approach for environmental and social issues, there must be a rethinking of the field. Inspired by Lederach's (1995) definition of conflict transformation, Sharoni (1996) proposes a shift from the conventional approaches dealing with conflict to a new way of thinking in theory, practice, and research, which locates social change at the center of its political project. This shift in approach implies a new set of assumptions (including context-specificity of conflict theory and practice) and a bottom-up perspective to conflict research and practice.

In the international development arena, gender analysis, livelihood systems, and political ecology theories have contributed to our understanding of the complexity and diversity of the systems where conflict arises at the household, community, national, and international levels. These theories acknowledge the need to study conflict in light of its unique history and characteristics, stressing the assumption that conflict is a context-specific phenomenon. In this section, a brief review of the potential contributions to conflict theory is outlined.

Gender analysis literature in the 1980s and 1990s challenged the assumption that the household functioned as a single unit of production and consumption (Overholt *et al.*, 1985; Poats *et al.*, 1989). Before that time, research and development efforts were guided by the supposition that households are unified entities in which: a) all members agree, b) resources are pooled among members, and c) members' goals and needs are identical (Becker, 1965). The acknowledgment of differences between men and women's roles in society changed previous assumptions about the

homogeneity of the household and introduced the concept of “intra-household dynamics” (Poats *et al.*, 1989). Men and women’s roles at the household level are the result of a set of power relations derived from social arrangements and cultural rules. Young *et al.* (1990) introduced the social relations framework in which gender roles are a source of conflict as well as mutual benefit, and it examines the unequal access to resources for different members of the household. This framework emphasizes women’s heterogeneity and the social relations that exist within a community. Kabeer (1995, p. 62) cites Young (1981) in this regard, “the form that gender relations take in any historical situation is specific to that situation and has to be constructed inductively; it cannot be read off from other social relations nor from the gender relations of other societies”.

Schmink (1999) takes this analysis a step further and suggests the use of a “gendered political ecology” framework to analyze the complexity of these systems and highlight the importance of natural resource management. This framework allows an analysis of how, over time, political, socioeconomic, and ecological factors condition decisions regarding use and control of resources by different people. In the social sphere, decisions about natural and other types of resources are affected by policies, markets, demographic and institutional factors at the national and international level (Schmink, 1999, p. 3). This framework concurs with Vayrynen’s (1991), which claims that interests, issues, and actors change over time as a consequence of social, economic, and political dynamics of society; therefore, there is a distinct need for a theory that embraces the dynamic basis of conflict transformation.

At the community level, the evolution of thinking progressed from the view of the community as a homogeneous and harmonious unit of analysis to the realization that communities are complex and heterogeneous social systems. As our understanding of cultural, social, and ecological diversity increased, communities came to be viewed as having been formed by heterogeneous groups of people who live in the same geographic region and share access to local natural and economic resources. Social unity cannot be assumed *a priori*, since cultural diversity, common beliefs and institutions, economic status, and other social factors vary widely within and among communities (Schmink, 1999).

To elaborate on the assumption of a need for a bottom-up approach to conflict research and practice, we can also build on experience in the international development arena, where practitioners have moved towards a new paradigm in their practice to be able to respond more effectively to the diversity, complexity, and dynamism of livelihood systems and processes in which conflict develops. This new paradigm is what Chambers (1997) calls a

reversal of realities. This entails a movement from what he calls “a normal professionalism” (which deals with “things” and is top-bottom, blueprint in measurement, and seeks standardization) to a “new professionalism” (which deals with people and is bottom-up, focuses on learning process, and encourages judgment and diversity) (Chambers, 1997, pp. 189-190).

During the 1970s and 1980s, the methods and tools used by development practitioners began to shift from tools that extracted information from local people to tools that shared knowledge and empowered participants in the process. According to Chambers (1997), rapid rural appraisal and participatory rural appraisal emerged as a response to a changing development paradigm and was supported primarily by people working at the field level in partnership with government and non-government organizations, and international and national research centers. Contrary to past social science research that deposited knowledge in scholarly institutions of the north, participatory research can be used in the context of development to describe an empowerment process that enables local people to analyze their own situations, gain control, and participate in decision-making processes (Chambers, 1995, p. 30).

Participatory action research also originated with critiques of earlier research methods which cited the failure of conventional research to respond to the needs of local people in developing countries (Martin and Sherington, 1997). Participatory action research is distinguished by its use of participation tools and methods to meet a societal need (Herlihy and Knapp, 2003). Four basic themes define this type of research: empowerment of individuals, collaboration based on a participatory process, acquisition of knowledge, and social change (Fals-Borda, 1987).

Conflict transformation, as mentioned previously, should have at its core the principle of social change. Development theory holds poverty at the center of the development discourse. It assumes that the major reason for poverty is the oppression or exploitation of the poorest by the more powerful. Therefore, power relations must constitute an important part of the explanation of any lack of development in a society. Empowerment of the people becomes an imperative agenda for development. The term empowerment originates from the social movements in the 1960s and 1970s, and the emancipation movement in Latin America, which was influenced by the work of Paulo Freire (1972) (see Bigdon and Korf, 2004). Empowerment is central to the process of development; however, it must be located within a broader framework, where the goal of development is the cultural and political acceptance of universal human rights. The sustainable livelihood approaches of the 1990s—also called livelihood approaches—evolved on the

basis of participatory methods (Chambers, 1997; Scoones, 1998; Carney *et al.*, 1999). Livelihood systems include the analysis of production (farming) systems, and the sociocultural, political, and organizational environments in which the household is tightly knit (Chambers and Conway, 1992). The emphasis of sustainable livelihood approaches is on working with people, facilitating learning processes, helping them build upon their own strengths and acknowledge their own potential, while simultaneously assessing the effects of policies and institutions, external shocks, and trends. Sustainable livelihood approaches acknowledge the connections and interactions that happen at the micro level (household and/or communities) with the larger socioeconomic, cultural, and political contexts at the meso (local and regional organizations, private-sector associations) and macro (national and international organizations and policy) levels. Sustainable livelihood approaches help to reconcile a holistic perception of sustainable livelihood with the operational need for focused development interventions. With elements from this theoretical and practical review, the case study of the community of Robles and their social cartography process is presented as a tool for participatory planning and conflict transformation

The Community of Robles and their Social Cartography Process

The community of Robles is located at the southwest corner of the Cauca Valley Department, Colombia. The majority of the people are descendants of African slaves who once served in large haciendas. At the beginning of the 1990s, the first grassroots organizations emerged in Robles in response to an urgent need to organize, plan, and develop proposals in the areas of health, education, food security, community safety, and environmental issues. One of the organizations that took the lead in this planning process was *Funecorobles*, a non-profit, Afro-Colombian grassroots, environmental non-governmental organization (NGO). Funecorobles' mission links the goals of biodiversity conservation with the empowerment of local communities through participatory planning. Their experience shows that in order to reach conservation objectives, communities must be involved in long-term learning processes that empower and drive them to action.

Funecorobles adopted the social cartography methodology as a participatory tool to work with the entire community of Robles in their long-term planning process. Social cartography was not an unfamiliar methodology to many of the people in the community as it was being used along the Pacific Coast region of Colombia as part of the process of territorialization. This

process occurred in “social-carto-graphic” forums after representative community councils filed territorial claims (Offen, 2003). The implications of this are elaborated by Offen (2003, p. 17):

Law 70 creates black territories in Pacific Colombia by defining the notion of a “black community” that can become invested with territorial rights. The law does this, essentially, by elaborating a “black ethnicity”, something constituted by culture [traditional production systems], history [*palenques* and self-liberation], and geography [rural riverine and Pacific].”

Although, Robles was not part of this process, its outcome directly affected the way all Afro-Colombian communities later engaged in a process to reclaim their territories.

As result of the territorialization process, the territory was recognized not only as a piece of land but also as a cultural space where men, women, and nature live together with diverse ethnic groups, knowledge, and practices that engage in constant exchange. The territory encompasses not only the landscape, mountains, rivers, valleys, human settlements, bridges, roads, and plantations, but also the space inhabited by memory, history, and the experience of the people (Restrepo, 2005; Andrade and Santamaria, 1997). The individuals, households, communities, and environmental and social landscape of a territory become a complex net of relationships in a system that must be understood by everyone in order to achieve social change.

Like the territorialization processes, other development interventions took place in Colombia in which social cartography was adapted, used, modified, and improved. This methodology emerged as a result of dialogue and experience among a group of people from different disciplines who recognized the potential to develop a tool for social transformation through the use of cartographic maps (Restrepo and Velasco, 1998; Restrepo *et al.*, 1999; Mora-Paez and Jaramillo, 2004). Several characteristics of this methodology made it a good fit for the challenges faced by Funecorobles. First, it is a straightforward methodology: it uses a visual and graphic method of representation, which lends itself to group work. Second, it is an alternative form of communication when working with communities with high rates of illiteracy, disparity of power relations, and distrust among groups participating in a process. Third, fundamental to social cartography is the recognition that whoever inhabits the territory is one who knows it and the belief that it is possible to initiate a planning process based on such knowledge.

Social Cartography Methodology

The first workshops in Robles started with a process of participatory assessment. There is no blueprint for the use of this methodology that can be applied regardless of context; nevertheless, there are general procedures that guide the mapping activities. The process includes three phases: (1) diagnosis, (2) construction of maps, and (3) interpretation of the information collected on the maps (Fundaminga, 2002; Andrade and Santamaria, 1997; Habegger and Mancila, 2006).

During the diagnosis phase, the group that facilitates the mapping process meets with community representatives to review the purpose and objectives of the mapping activity. At this point, information is gathered through interviews, focus groups, observations, and transect walks, and cartographic maps of the correct scale are made available. The facilitation team elaborates guides for the mapping activities. These guides consist of a set of questions relevant to the goals of the mapping activity. Workshop logistics are prepared, thus ensuring all members of the community are represented in the process.

The second phase includes the actual construction of maps. Maps can be drawn using different materials, the criteria being that the participants find the materials easy to work with. Such materials range from simple flipcharts or graphing paper and markers, up to scale maps and the use of GIS (global information system) or GPS (global positioning system) – it all depends on the purpose of the mapping exercise and the accuracy required. Maps can be two-dimensional or three-dimensional models. The maps should be elaborated on the floor or on tables where participants can surround it. Placing the maps this way benefits horizontal dialog. Participants are divided into groups with a maximum 8 to 10 people working on the maps. In each group, one person is selected to document the process that takes place while all members draw the maps.

The complexities of the systems analyzed require the use of several maps to decipher the territory. The first set of maps includes people and nature, infrastructure, cultural and social relations, and conflict maps. The people and nature map shows production activities and resources. It reflects the general landscape of the territory showing the zones used for subsistence activities, such as hunting, fishing, farming, gathering fruits, and building materials. In the infrastructure map, productive, reproductive, and service infrastructures are highlighted, including housing, public services, schools, health posts, villages, roads, and trails. The third map reflects cultural and social networks as well as areas of cultural and spiritual importance, local markets, sites for cultural practices, and mystic sites, among others. The fourth map highlights conflicts, risks, vulnerabilities, and potentialities. This map notes conflicts at different levels, from within the household to local,

regional, societal, and global scales. Conflict maps can focus on problems between communities, populations, and states, the conflict between community and enterprises or trans-nationals with interests in the community area due to resources (water, land, air), or based on the strategic geographic location. They can focus on environmental conflict associated with the risk of deforestation, erosion, flooding, or climate change.

Together, the maps represent the livelihood system of a particular community, which includes the production systems and the sociocultural, political, and organizational environments in which individuals, households, and communities are embedded. Conflict maps are therefore conceptualized and analyzed in the context of broader livelihood systems in which participants find their geographic, socioeconomic, and cultural space. The construction of conflict maps with the social cartography process acknowledges that conflicts occurring mainly in local contexts may extend to national and global levels due to their particular legal relevance or to efforts by local actors to influence broader decision-making processes (Schmink, 1999).

All of the maps mentioned thus far are then analyzed with a time perspective; that is, each map is drawn illustrating the past, present, and future of each set of systems. The incorporation of a time dimension facilitates the analysis of the dynamic basis of conflict transformation. Historical maps, or maps of the past, emphasize rescuing the collective memory of the participants. They can provide insight on the transformation of systems, highlighting changes that have occurred in the community, and they can identify cyclical phenomena. This activity allows participants to recognize their territory and share its memory. Present maps help participants look at the present situation facing their community. The four maps explained above are usually drawn in the present, since this is the immediate reality in which participants operate. By comparing them with the historical map, the evolution of the community is revealed. Future maps, also known as “maps of dreams”, reflect how participants would like their community to look in the future. During this activity, participants dream, believe in utopias once again, and work toward a shared vision. This chronological view provides the basis for the social cartography process. The mapping process reaffirms the sense of belonging to a territory and identifies the underlying interest in finding solutions to its problems (Andrade and Santamaria, 1997).

The third phase starts with the groups reporting the process that took place in each group and highlighting the most important parts, including disagreements on points of view, conceptualization of relationships, and the

logistics of the process. This phase includes debates and social creativity workshops (Habegger and Mancila, 2006).

A key characteristic of this mapping process is that it is recognized as a learning process. Community members gain knowledge through the mapping exercise about their own reality. The participation of representatives of all community groups and others who are representing stakeholders outside the community enables a vertical dialog. However, it is important to assess the type of participation of different stakeholders, since that participation can range from simply being informed, to obtaining different types of benefits, to empowerment through full involvement in the process of decision-making and management (Schmink, 1999, p. 3).

Returning to the process initiated in the community of Robles, the drawing of the first maps constituted the basis for their planning process. The collective analysis of the information recorded on the maps helped guide the elaboration of proposals and programs in different areas. Most importantly, the community claimed ownership of the process and in the following years, the maps constructed in the 1990s have been the departure point for subsequent development strategies. The inclusion of all community groups since the beginning of this process is evident. The majority of the people in Robles view the mapping process as the point of reference for a major community activity. Some of the results of this participatory process as presented by the community include:

- the reconstruction of their territory, its history and its culture
- the empowerment of different groups within the community (women, elderly, children, young adults, teachers, community leaders)
- increased visibility of the roles of women in production, reproduction, and community sphere
- increased local acknowledgement of activities executed by local NGOs
- increased participation by the community members in local initiatives.

Community organizations and other groups involved in the process have gained regional and national recognition as they projected some of their activities to regional and national development agendas. Community members have become more open to change and transformation processes. Democratization of knowledge and information has taken place at all levels. Further, community members feel they share a knowledge base constructed collectively and based on each other's recollection of history and past events, which they have integrated into the reality of their daily lives. Knowledge about their territory and resources translates into power to express and defend their rights at the national and international levels. In recent years, social cartography workshops have included an initial approximation to working

with geographical information technologies like GIS and GPS. These technologies offer the community advantages to advance the territorialization process.

As any other methodology social cartography has its limitations and disadvantages. One of them is that, because of the complexity of the information the methodology delivers, its interpretation is difficult for people who did not participate of the exercise. The maps are considered cultural and symbolic products, therefore, they have to be interpreted according to the socio-cultural context in which they have been created (Di Gessa, 2008).

Conclusion

Social cartography as a participatory tool and framework for conflict transformation works with many of the assumptions mentioned in the literature by conflict resolution scholars. The social cartography process is context specific. The mapping activity helps participants understand the complex interactions between context, structure, actors, and goals of the community members and other outside stakeholders. The methodology provides maps of past, present and future that respond to the dynamic nature of conflicts. This participatory bottom-up approach has at its core the promise of social justice, an innate characteristic of this process that was developed parallel to the territorialization struggle in Colombia.

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THE SIX UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM STUDENT MOBILITY PROJECT: PROMOTING CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTEXT

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Abstract

This article focuses on the North American Conflict Resolution Program - a twenty-first century mobility consortium in which universities in Canada, Mexico, and the United States exchanged students of conflict resolution. Drawing on student perceptions and, in particular, the experiences of the universities of Manitoba and Louisville, the authors discuss the positive outcomes of mobilizing students to study conflict resolution abroad for the students themselves, for faculty members involved, for university and other communities, and for the field of conflict analysis and resolution.

Introduction

Canada, Mexico and the United States face a host of contentious social problems whose substance is often further complicated by cross-cultural misunderstandings and the lack of a single, shared North American language. Some of these issues are social; others are political, economic or ethical. Some (such as domestic violence or the inequitable treatment of minorities) occur in all three countries, while others (such as immigration or pollution) are transnational – the problems themselves reaching across our borders (Fowler *et al.*, 2002).

Across North American campuses, “conflict analysis and resolution” and “peace studies” are new and rapidly growing fields of interdisciplinary academic inquiry, exciting for students and faculty, and rich in their implications for the future welfare and progress of the continent (Byrne and Senehi, 2008). However, while the study of conflict resolution has attracted considerable attention at Canadian, Mexican and U.S. universities, extensive transnational undertakings among them have lagged behind. Few students have moved across borders to study conflict resolution in neighboring countries, and few faculties have promoted the cross-boundary, cross-fertilization of conflict resolution teaching ideas, materials, and approaches. And yet, few question the premise that all across North America future generations of leaders in a wide variety of fields must have strong

peacebuilding, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills to cope with problems arising within and among families, communities, businesses, regions, nations, and governments (Kriesberg, 1998).

As North America has become more economically and socially intertwined in recent decades, a cardinal opportunity has arisen for universities to synthesize and apply the theories and practice of conflict resolution being developed in each country. In this context six universities in Canada, Mexico, and the United States developed an educational partnership termed *The North American Consortium for a Culture of Peace*, which aimed to mobilize students, and to a lesser degree faculty, to study conflict resolution together, as North Americans rather than as citizens of the particular states. Through the promotion of student mobility, practicum placements, and faculty interaction, the Consortium hoped to illuminate North American social problems for students and to advance a shared vision of a just and peaceful continent, while greatly enriching academic offerings at the participating universities.

The University of Louisville conceived of the North American conflict resolution student exchange idea, and its Muhammad Ali Institute for Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution was quickly joined in leading the program by the Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice at the University of Manitoba and the Universidad de Colima, noted for its extensive student exchange programs. Secondary partners – the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the Université de Montreal, and the Universidad Autonoma de San Luis Potosí – provided valuable guidance and support. These six universities launched this novel student mobility program with financial support from Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC), the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE) of the U.S. Department of Education, and the Dirección de Desarrollo Universitario, Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) in Mexico. The partners then cooperated to prepare and then move dozens of students to foreign partner universities, where they could learn about conflict resolution in a different society, from different professors, alongside students of a different culture, and often in a different language. In this way, a project of higher education that was emphatically transnational, cross-cultural, and interdisciplinary sought to leap over distance and culture to assist undergraduates to develop the ability to understand and analyze various types of conflicts and to create promising strategies for resolving them (Fowler, Byrne and Senehi, 2002).

This article is a qualitative study that catalogues the perceptions of dozens of students who participated in the *North American Conflict Resolution Program* (NACRP). It analyzes their feedback, incorporates

relevant perspectives from staff, faculty, and an outside evaluator, and provides an overview of project undertakings. This article thus provides a window on the opportunities furnished by this type of student exchange. The article focuses on the following questions:

- what conflict resolution issues did this program cover?
- how did the project function?
- what were the student-participant's perceptions of their experiences?
- what conclusions and recommendations might be derived from this effort to institute a regional conflict resolution student exchange program?

The Conflict Analysis and Resolution Field

Each of the Consortium universities had its own signature areas within the conflict resolution field. Thus, each student participant could tailor a unique program of study, exploring particular conflicts, drawing on the academic specialties of particular professors, and taking advantage of particular curricular offerings and internship possibilities. For example, a Canadian student might study conflicts in communities and the particular problem of domestic violence, first by drawing on expertise at the University of Manitoba and then by studying the same subject at the Universidad de Colima, which houses one of Mexico's leading programs on the subject. While capitalizing upon each other's different approaches to and different strengths in the field of conflict resolution, each university committed to work together to initiate, develop, or expand its conflict resolution curricula and to learn from the scholarship, community initiatives, and teaching methods and materials of its partners.

The participating universities thus found it important to forge a basic common understanding of the conflict analysis and resolution (CAR) field and to identify key issues to which participants might be exposed in university classrooms and practicum experiences. Generally, academic programs in the CAR field teach students the analytical, theoretical, and practical skills necessary to analyze and design appropriate interventions in protracted conflicts (Kriesberg, 2001). Topics frequently discussed include human needs, minority rights, human security, violence prevention, indigenous peacemaking, women's peacemaking, restorative justice, cultural and gender identities, environmental sustainability, appropriate technologies for development, and peace education. Among the subjects examined are ethnic, inter-cultural, and international conflict, conflicts regarding communities and the environment, and conflict in schools, businesses, and health care institutions. The CAR field examines both direct and structural violence,

ranging from genocide and war to hate crimes, family violence, and violence against children. Social cleavages, such as class, race, religious, ethnic, or linguistic divides, are also explored (Byrne and Senehi, 2008). An overriding goal is to identify, analyze, and promote diverse nonviolent approaches for addressing social divisions in ways that meet the needs of all parties, attend to social justice, and are sustainable. Although each university had its own distinctive pedagogical approaches, each operated within this general understanding of the discipline.

The CAR field emphasizes certain key components of outstanding peacemakers, and at each university various of these arose in the effort to equip students to assess and handle conflict more skillfully, peacefully, and effectively. First, dialogue raises one's consciousness, and humanizes the other in a process of empowerment and recognition that seeks to build trust (Kriesberg, 1998). Second, personal involvement in a web of relationships builds bridges that provide nonviolent alternatives. For example, a storytelling festival with a peacebuilding ethos creates a synergy across cultures that educates participants about social issues and other cultures (Senehi, 2000, 2002, 2008). Third, transforming relationships means imagining a shared future that creates multiple scenarios to restore justice and build cultural awareness (Boulding, 1990). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, for example, was built on the foundation of restoring justice coupled with ingredients of compassion, love, and a spiritual connectedness to indigenous peacemaking systems. Fourth, each individual has a duty to contribute to making a difference, whether locally, nationally or globally, providing a sense of hope so that others can act (Barash and Webel, 2002). As Gandhi (1992) commented "peace begins with me". Fifth, oppressed people are made aware of injustice and empowered to act, encouraging people to participate in a process of transformative change (Friere, 1999). Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mother Theresa, for example, worked to empower the poor and oppressed in the U.S. and India in nonviolent processes. Sixth, a new paradigm of thinking empowers people to visualize and work for peace, focusing on specific goals such as improving human rights, alleviating poverty, and attending to women's issues (Jeong, 2000). Finally, CAR gives us the tools to rebuild our interconnected world; and in our world we are all interconnected (Byrne and Senehi, 2008). When people ignored the plight of the migrant workers in California who developed a rare form of leukemia from the pesticides used on the grapes, for example, Cesar Chavez linked the issue to the consumers who were also being poisoned by the same chemicals. As A. J. Muste said, "there is no way to peace. Peace is the way" (cited in Chopra, 2005, p. 7).

Since third parties frequently become engaged in all levels of conflicts, another critically important feature of the NACRP involved the exploration of third-party intervention. To promote conflict resolution by transforming relationships and structures, parents, teachers, mediators, tribal elders, ombudspersons, the media, and the legal system intervene in conflict situations (Umbreit, 1995). In Africa, the moot is facilitated by tribal elders as the disputing parties reach agreement (Tuso, 1997). Each intervention process incorporates rules to help to resolve the conflict, and under particular circumstances one process may be more appropriate or more productive than another. For example, one whose rights are threatened may prefer to choose adjudication, rather than mediation or negotiation.

Students enrolled in the North American mobility program worked within the above framework, trying to gain both new understandings and practical skills related to peace making and conflict resolution. Each participant could select a course of study that featured certain common themes but which also emphasized different dimensions of conflict resolution, such as gender, culture, storytelling, negotiation, or international conflict resolution, as we elaborate below.

Gender

One important aspect of conflict resolution involves the effect of gender on peace and justice. Through courses in women's studies, sociology, political science, and other relevant disciplines, and through corresponding practicum experiences, NACRP students could explore how women may become invisible and excluded from key positions of power, while male agendas have more status than female agendas. Women get co-opted by the hegemonic patriarchy, hegemonic ideology, and pattern of domination so that they lose their own discourse, autonomy, and stories (Tickner, 1993). Male dominance and privilege is a consequence of the militarized patriarchal culture that elevates males and devalues females (Enloe, 1993, 2000). There is a double colonization of objectified women by patriarchy and the men who construct the misogynist masculine culture whereby women have to accept certain assumptions about marriage, femininity, and mothering (Allen, 1996). For example, the military industrial complex depends on certain kinds of overt and hidden sexual relations in the workplace (harassment), in the home (domestic violence), and in war (rape) (Sylvester, 2002).

Tannen (1990) makes the point that males and females use and organize information on the basis of gender. Males are in ritual opposition with each other through argument, and challenge with a communication style based

around persuasion, militant and power language, and self-assertion (“report talk”). Females are oppressed into silence within the patriarchal context of the workplace and classroom changing speech patterns. Females take a relational view of others based on trust and openness including their point of view, building relationships based on shared experience (“rapport talk”). Males approach a moral problem from an ethics of rights (“legal rules”) and females from an ethics of care (“preserve the relationship”). We are thus socialized to see the world through the gender schemata we carry into conflict. CAR manages the manifestations of conflict by maintaining the patriarchal system and the power relations of domination and subordination (Taylor and Miller, 1994).

CAR focuses on a rational problem to be solved rather than the parties’ interests; the field does not place value on real needs, caring, and understanding, or on providing a localized settlement of a conflict such as wife abuse, for example, which is kept out of the public domain and policymakers’ focus (Taylor and Miller, 1994). CAR does not change the basic roots of male domination, property, and power. Transformational conflict resolution, on the other hand, can approach conflict at a deeper level to transform values, attitudes and needs in a balanced process that replaces a hierarchical means of social control (Schwerin, 1995; Woolpert *et al.*, 1998). Transformational conflict resolution can assist males and females to develop a joint cooperative understanding of the causes and the dynamics of conflict, transforming conflict from “power over” to “power with” (Baruch Bush and Folger, 1994; Byrne, 2001; Ryan, 2007). Males and females can thus weave a collective story to expand the pie to work together for change using empathy and active listening to learn to understand about the problem together (Senehi, 2000, 2002; Senehi and Byrne, 2006).

Culture

As an important aspect of conflict and conflict resolution, studying culture and working cross-culturally formed another key focus of the NACRP. Often transmitted by customs, practices, language, beliefs, symbols, social practices, and institutions (Lederach, 1995), culture is created by a group, and includes within it the group’s history, identity, ideology, and worldview (Ross, 1993, 2007). Culture’s meaning is encoded in stories that provide intergenerational continuity, and explain the meaning of life (Senehi, 1996, 2000, 2002). Culture helps life to become more predictable, and allows individuals to understand others in their own cultural group: cultural values

influence what people see, hear, and feel, and how they interact with others (Cohen, 1997).

Low context cultures are monochronic, emphasizing the task, and its members compartmentalize their personal relationships, work, and many aspects of daily life (Avruch, 1998). Monochronic people frequently do one thing at a time, concentrate on the job, take time commitments seriously, follow privacy rules, respect private property, and are accustomed to short-term relationships. High context cultures are polychronic emphasizing the relationship; their members stay in close touch constantly because facets of life are seen as part of an integrated web of social relationships (Avruch, 1998). Polychronic people tend to do many things at once, tolerate interruptions, have flexible time commitments, are committed to people and relationships, change plans often, and build lifetime relationships.

When people move outside their own culture, they often continue to view life via their own cultural lens, and they attend to cues that are culturally coded; this can result in culture shock and the need to adjust to an unfamiliar social system (Tuso, 1997). Old skills of interaction do not work, stress occurs, and people take time to readjust. In cross-cultural contexts CAR requires that one understand where people are coming from by listening deeply to tap into their knowledge system to develop a critical awareness that leads to personal empowerment (Senehi, 2008). Third parties, too, are a product of their own culture's values, rules, preferences, and expectations of others (Zartman, 1995). To function effectively across cultural divides, third parties must understand how their cultural values, biases, and needs affect others, and they must strive to understand the language, assumptions about conflict, and communication style (verbal and non-verbal) of the other cultures involved (Augsburger, 1992). For example, what protocol should be used in a collectivist milieu to address a conflict? In other words, who talks first in the story, what are the seating arrangements to show respect, what are the opening rituals to be used, etc.?

Storytelling

The University of Manitoba brought to the Consortium special expertise in the area of storytelling and conflict resolution. Wherever people live, stories grow. Throughout human history, storytelling has been a means of sharing experience, bringing people together, and passing cultural knowledge and values to the next generation (Senehi, 1996). Stories nourish our moral imagination. For young people, the imagination used in storytelling is necessary for brain development, and positive stories build resiliency (Senehi

and Byrne, 2006). For everyone, stories – the ones that we have internalized and the stories we tell about history and our lives – are the basis of social thought and action, which makes and remakes our world (Senehi, 2002).

Negotiation

Negotiation might be thought to comprise another subfield of conflict resolution, one that draws on an increasingly rich scholarly literature. NACRP students at the University of Louisville took a core active-learning course entitled “Coping with Conflict: The North American Experience” that explored how people in Canada, Mexico, and the United States might contend with an array of common conflicts. Students negotiated and then analyzed realistic hypothetical cases that placed them in diverse scenarios related to business, the environment, family and community, and other local, national, and international issues. The simulations required the class to learn and practice an array of practical negotiation skills and to think through a host of important negotiation issues. Over time, the negotiations became increasingly complex and eventually placed the students in the position of negotiators handling multi-party, multi-issue scenarios that occupied entire class sessions.

Harvard Law School’s Program on Negotiation supplied each of the simulations, whose range encompassed a dispute regarding Native American laborers, a sexual harassment claim, a small claims mediation, a Nazi march in a Jewish neighborhood, a proposed ban on billboards in a city, the site of a mental health care facility, a possible campus speech by Louis Farrakhan, the use of grant monies to respond to urban homelessness, the renegotiation of a labor contract, and a negotiated rule-making effort concerning air pollution. Each class was divided among simulations, debriefings in which the assigned hypothetical disputes and ensuing student negotiations were analyzed, discussions concerning the chief issues and strategies faced by those engaged in conflict resolution, and films about the conflict resolution process.

International Conflict Resolution

Many of the NACRP universities offered students coursework in international conflict resolution. Kenneth Waltz’s (1959) levels of analysis point out the connections between the individual, the state, and the international system. Interdependence exists between interstate, transgovernmental, and transnational relations as institutions with rules manage relations between states. Yet, realists assume an anarchic global

system with a hierarchy of issues ranging from nuclear proliferation to human rights, and the economic well-being of the Global South to the ecological wholeness of the Global Commons. International and non-governmental organizations work within the purview of sovereignty and international law to strive for peace within and between states (Pearson, 2001). European integration has decreased nationalism and war through economic and scientific cooperation that has spilled over into the political arena to create a working peace system (Mitrany, 1966). Track I political elites can still operate as honest brokers to mediate protracted interstate conflicts, bringing their power, prestige, and resources to the table.

In foreign policy decision making, individuals have different thinking styles that must be taken into account in a conflict milieu (Byrne, 2003). Because of their contrasting backgrounds, cultures, personalities, temperaments, and perceptions of problems through their own conceptual lenses, not all people operate with the same kind of rationality (Jervis, 1976). Individuals can avoid uncomfortable information by relying on historical analogies and wishful thinking; people might act based on misperceptions or on what they think others expect of them. Some ignore or suppress dissidents' discordant information, and by so doing limit choices of action as a resulting groupthink prevents a discussion of alternatives (Janis, 1972).

The North American Mobility in Higher Education Project

How, then, did the participating universities operationalize the exploration of these and other conflict resolution themes? The ongoing North American Mobility in Higher Education (NAMHE) Project is administered and funded collectively by HRSDC, FIPSE, and the SEP. Its purpose is to improve and increase: (1) the quality of human resource development, including the preparation of students to work in the global economy, (2) North American student mobility, (3) partnerships among institutions of higher education in Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, and (4) trilateral exchange of knowledge and expertise in higher education and training (International Academic Mobility Program, 2005). Established in 1995, after ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement, NAMHE thus encourages student mobility and co-operation and collaboration in higher education, research and training. Since its inception, HRSDC has approved more than fifty projects, with subjects ranging from urban conservation, agriculture and tourism management, to mental health, social welfare, and public health education (International Academic Mobility Program, 2005). Each project includes at

least six partner universities, two from each country, and aims to encourage a student-centered North American dimension to education and training.

The North American Conflict Resolution Program commenced in September 2003, with an anticipated four years of funding. The lead universities of Manitoba, Louisville, and Colima managed and administered the project and reported to each funding agency. Aimed at upper level undergraduates, the NACRP successfully mobilized fifty-five students, from a range of academic disciplines, with each student spending one semester abroad at a partner institution. Furthermore, faculty members networked and traveled to one another's campuses for site visits, lectures and classroom demonstrations, and visiting positions. One University of Louisville professor was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to teach political science at the Universidad de Colima, while another Louisville professor spent a semester teaching negotiation, in Spanish, via active-learning methods to Colima students of law and politics. On various occasions faculty shared syllabi, teaching ideas, and reading lists, and presented their research to one another. Numerous faculty associates attended the "Conflict Resolution in the Americas" Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in April 2006.

Prior to the commencement of the program, the lead institutions drafted, gained the approval of legal counsel and other authorities and the signature of each university president, to a detailed Memorandum of Understanding that laid out common expectations and responsibilities. One important aspect involved the portability of credits from one university to another, something complicated, in general, by differences in the three university systems, and, more specifically by varying conceptions of matters ranging from credit hours to number of courses constituting a full academic load. Among the problems encountered were students who did not receive as many credits in their study abroad as they would have at their home institution, students who registered for classes too late and found particular offerings closed, and students not able to take particular courses necessary for their majors or their degrees. The focus on student mobility, however, is leading many universities toward more liberal credit recognition policies – a development of significant value in the global marketplace and in an age of migration.

The universities committed to prepare students prior to their travel by ensuring that they had a fundamental grounding in conflict resolution, requisite language ability, and appropriate cultural knowledge. While abroad, participants enrolled in one required course, two electives and an internship, with an emphasis on conflict resolution. Four principal themes, reflective of the signature areas of the participating universities, helped to bring intellectual

coherence to the project: conflict as related to the family and community, business, the environment, and foreign policy.

In examining North American conflict and conflict resolution, the participants had to contend with a number of challenging difficulties. For instance, quite apart from skills and training, one's language, experiences and worldview all influence how one perceives and reacts to conflict (Avruch, 1998), as do issues of race, ethnicity, class, and gender. The NACRP enabled students to explore the differing attitudes, assumptions, values, and approaches that characterize conflict resolution within the different North American contexts and to postulate ways to deal effectively with cultural differences (Fowler, Byrne, and Senehi, 2002).

A critically important dimension of the program was the directed internship. Each host university placed visiting students in an organization engaged in actively responding to intra- or inter-cultural conflict. To ensure the work experience was as rewarding as possible, a faculty member was assigned to each student in order to provide oversight, counsel, and academic structure. Thus, in addition to the required 200 hours of work at the internship site, students met regularly with their faculty advisor and program coordinator, maintained a journal that detailed their experiences, and wrote a research paper that analyzed their internship work. The participants thus had faculty assistance not only in solving occasional problems, but in reflecting on related issues, topics, and experiences. To ensure maximum effort and rigor, the internship was graded for academic credit. The Directors of the Mauro Centre developed a practicum handbook, a practicum site evaluation form, a practicum student evaluation form, and a log of practicum hours form that was used by the partner universities (Byrne and Senehi, 2004; North American Student Mobility Grant, 2004).

The chief goal of the practicum was for students to gain practical, hands-on experiences and insights as they interacted with the community outside of the university and participated in processes of conflict analysis and resolution. Students could collaborate with outside professionals in observing and conducting conflict interventions and in altering existing programs or designing new ones, including courses, workshops, training seminars, and dispute systems analysis and design. Practicum sites included a wide range of public and private, governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as legislatures, mediation centers, peace and justice organizations, social service and law enforcement agencies, schools, courts, and hospitals.

Each practicum site accepted student interns for its own constellation of reasons. Some sought to multiply links to the university involved. Others were eager to take advantage of the participants' skills, such as native

fluency in a foreign language or developing conflict resolution abilities. Some were proud to help to shape the next generation of professionals in the CAR field (Byrne and Senehi, 2004). The synergistic relationship among student, university, and practicum site was critically important to successful field experiences (Byrne and Senehi, 2004). The practicum component also allowed each university to further their community missions, developing and cementing positive relations beyond the campus.

To strengthen the linkages between the universities and to allow student participants to communicate with each other, the Consortium developed a listserv and a website that featured introductions to the campuses, to course material, and to participating faculty members and that provided an overview of some of the sites available for internships (see www.uwm.edu/Dept/CIE/FIPSE). While the NACRP website and listserv proved invaluable to the participants, the better use of technology in administering and evaluating exchange programs requires further investigation. Innovative possibilities certainly exist in linking technology with exchange projects, as well as CAR, and peace studies, especially given the transnational nature of both.

Through all these means, the project worked toward developing understanding of the causes of North American conflict, while seeking to provide students with the opportunity to explore peacebuilding initiatives (Fowler, Byrne and Senehi, 2002). This singular cooperative endeavor among North American peoples, universities and governments, focused on inspiring a mutually beneficial cross-cultural search for better answers to North American problems.

Evaluation of the North American Conflict Resolution Program

The Program was evaluated in different ways, as directed by the funding agencies in each country. In the United States, outside evaluator Susan Allen Nan of the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University prepared a multi-method, utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997) that included a formative evaluation after the first year, monitoring throughout the grant, and a final summative evaluation. Her pre-exchange and post-exchange surveys covered students from all three countries and all six universities, and included as well interviews of project directors and other faculty and examination of project materials.

Similarly, in Canada, to highlight successes and identify areas for improvement, project administrators surveyed participating students from the University of Manitoba and the University of Montreal. Each year,

evaluations were distributed to students upon their return home to Canada after the completion of their exchange experience. Thus, as a whole, they reflect key aspects of the evolution of the project over time. Additionally, the opinions and insights of visiting students from the Mexican and U.S. universities to the University of Manitoba were explored by reviewing their evaluations of their internships.

The University of Manitoba also assessed feedback from faculty members and the evaluations of each student's performance by the on-site practicum supervisors. Furthermore, project administrators periodically reviewed the proposal and initial timelines to ensure objectives regarding curriculum development, student mobility, and the transfer of knowledge were being met.

Outside Evaluator's Conclusions

In her final summative evaluation Susan Allen Nan reported: "This evaluation concludes that the North American Conflict Resolution Program Exchange was a highly successful program that positively impacted the study of many undergraduates who learned conflict resolution as well as North American cultures and languages" (Nan, 2008). She went on to note: participant responses indicate that their experiences were exceptional and that the impact of the program went much further than the individual students who traveled to other universities. Whole university courses and communities were enriched by the program. So, the program positively impacted hundreds more students than the individuals who traveled through the program. (Nan, 2008)

After noting that over 90 percent of the participants surveyed reported that they were "very satisfied" with their exchange experiences, Dr. Nan concluded: "Most students identified minor ... detail[s] of the exchange experience that were not ideal, such as one course being full and not available for enrollment, or an initial dormitory arrangement being unsatisfactory, or an internship experience which did not carry significant responsibility ... These ... details were ... presented as indeed minor in the context of an overall experience described by many as 'life changing' and 'outstanding' and 'the best ever'" (Nan, 2008). All but two of the student respondents reported that participating in the program had "very much" or "substantially" increased their knowledge of conflict resolution. All students who had to call upon foreign language training reported substantial language improvement, and all the participants declared "very significant" their participation in relevant social and cultural activities.

The outside evaluator found that NACRP students had very different internship experiences, with some of the participating universities doing a markedly better job than others in finding practicum sites that would provide a valuable learning experience. Dr. Nan (2008) wrote: “Some students loved their internships and listed these as areas of significant learning, and some had mixed feelings about internships that were both rewarding and frustrating”. The most negative comment came from a student who had traveled to Mexico and later wrote: “My goals were to have an internship, interesting and serious, in an organization or an institution where I would have learned and grown ... I wanted to be surrounded by people who treated me seriously and were respectful of what I did. I did not find any of those things during my stay” (Nan, 2008).

Balanced against this, however, were the many positive comments about the value of internships to the exchange experience, as illustrated by the following three extracts from evaluations administered by the University of Manitoba. A woman from Manitoba, who carried out a practicum at a Mexican local government department, wrote:

Having an internship was probably the most valuable part of my exchange. This is where I met the most people, learnt the most, and strengthened my Spanish skills the most. I was able to understand more about why Mexico is the way it is, and why, and how it handles a variety of situations including international relations. It was there, at my internship, that I became aware of the reality that so many people continue to battle for their essential basic rights.

A U.S. student who traveled to Canada and completed his practicum with a non-governmental mediation organization in Winnipeg, Manitoba commented as follows:

I came to Canada to improve my understanding of conflict resolution and mediation, to learn from a foreign social infrastructure alternative to the U.S., and to make real contributions to resolving conflicts in the world today. My practicum allowed me to accomplish each goal in some facet. It helped me understand the many components and concepts that embody conflict resolution. It helped me realize that conflict is a normal part of life. While many people see conflict as negative and feel ill-equipped to deal with it, a greater understanding of conflict resolution increases our ability to respond effectively. In fact, conflicts would not do the damage they do if they people involved applied conflict resolution skills early on ... If I keep an open mind and employ all the skills and techniques that I have learned, then together we can make a contribution of some sort to peace.

A University of Manitoba student who completed her internship at a U.S. NGO observed: “There are many circumstances in the North American

paradigm where the conflicts experienced at the organization were reflective of parallel conflicts in both Mexico and Canada ... Thus, this internship served to offer new ways to look at and deal with a major issue that North Americans hold in common". A student from Manitoba who completed his practicum with another U.S. NGO later commented:

The internship has also reminded me that my success in work and in life will not be judged based on the amount of money I make or the amount of people I surpass, but rather it will be on the effectiveness of and results derived from the organization I am part of, the quality of work I produce and the amount of people stating my name when asked to recommend a person of integrity and ethical professionalism ... It has reaffirmed my determination to pursue a career in anything international in scope and nature. Whether it be public or private, the need to teach people more constructive and productive ways of interaction in a shrinking world is imperative.

Thus, for some students the internship was clearly one of the most rewarding and thought-provoking aspects of the program.

Finally, on the institutional level Dr. Nan (2008) observed: "While the program was structured as an agreement amongst six universities, it was the people who really made it happen, with particular professors being noted repeatedly in the student evaluations". She concluded:

University of Louisville, University of Manitoba, and Universidad de Colima ... [t]hese lead institutions appear to have been more actively involved in the exchange program. They had more developed conflict resolution programs. Their faculty were cited as outstanding by students in surveys. These institutions voluntarily participated actively in the program evaluation process, even providing their own separately collected relevant data when requested by the evaluator. (Nan, 2008)

Impact on Particular Students

The voices of the students who participated in the North American Conflict Resolution Program are quite revealing of its rippling consequences. Students ranged in age from eighteen to thirty, and came from a wide variety of academic disciplines including political studies, economics, Spanish, law, psychology, social work and science. Many of these were first exposed to the CAR field through their preparation for and participation in the NACRP.

One key theme that emerged from student evaluations was the project's impact on personal development. The participants reported that their maturity and self-confidence had been enhanced and that they could better define their goals. Students also cited the cultural immersion experience, including the

different learning processes, as excellent preparation for challenging situations they may face in their developing careers. The NACRP clearly helped students to define their goals, personally and professionally. After studies in Mexico a student from Manitoba wrote, “this experience certainly gave me greater focus in my studies. I believe that I know better now what I want in my university career and will work harder for it”.

While this feature of the exchange arose in various student responses, another representative comment came from a Manitoba student who completed her exchange in Mexico: “Not only did I have the opportunity to learn about a nation which to Canada has, and will become increasingly important, but I also learned a lot about myself, which included my goals and interests. This exchange has equipped me with work experience that will strengthen my abilities and chances towards my chosen career path”. Another student from Manitoba who traveled to the U.S. later wrote:

This experience definitely opened up new possibilities for me in fields I had not previously considered prior to going on this exchange. The idea and field of international peacebuilding is an emerging field and practice, and one that I feel links together my passion for international studies and the desire to affect the world in a positive manner. What makes this field even more unique is that everyone – engineers, architects, soldiers, business executives etc. – can all be part of it. It complements nicely the skills one already possesses.

In fact, reflective of their experiences abroad and new understanding, a number of Canadian, Mexican and U.S. students who participated in the NACR program are now pursuing graduate programs in the CAR field. One University of Louisville student who had traveled to Mexico on the exchange was later awarded a Fulbright scholarship to teach conflict resolution theatre in Spanish to students in a village in the Dominican Republic. Another went on to win a Rotary Peace Scholarship to study conflict resolution in Ireland, and then was awarded a Fulbright to study one aspect of the conflict in Sri Lanka. He went on to enter a U.S. Ph.D. program in conflict resolution. Still others highlighted their exchange program experiences in successful applications to leading graduate programs in law, business, and divinity. And, many stayed in touch with professors, recounting their use of conflict resolution skills and knowledge and reporting to Dr. Nan “additional significant contact with professors, internship supervisors, or other students” since returning home (Nan, 2008).

When students were asked to select a skill or some knowledge that they acquired from their experience of living and studying in another country, ten of the thirteen respondents questioned by the University of Manitoba answered “self-confidence” as well as “intercultural understanding”. One woman traveled to Manitoba from the U.S. and termed her experience a

“journey of growth”, while a Manitoba student who spent her semester in the U.S. observed that the experience “helped me gain independence”. A Mexican student also noted that she matured while spending her semester at Manitoba: I grew up in this country as never before in my life. The information is brought to our hands in multiple ways; it is time to act. Human beings are being destroyed by us, by our lack of values and our fear to do something. We have to realize that our life is worthy and priceless. We have to open our eyes – I have opened mine. I am going to return to Mexico and I will make a change, because what is the theory for, if we don’t have the passion of the practice?

Many of the participants valued the singular opportunity they had enjoyed to study conflict resolution from the perspective of a university partner in a different North American country. Representative of these comments were those made by a Manitoba student who traveled to the U.S. and later wrote: “I also found it valuable to be exposed to American points of view during the programs. It is easy to fall into a certain way of viewing things and exposure to alternative opinions is important in order to gain a better understanding of current issues”.

Beyond these points, through participating in this innovative transnational conflict resolution program, students were able to interact across cultures and make friends with people they would otherwise never have known. The exchange project provided participants with an unparalleled opportunity to develop cross-cultural friendships and improve inter-cultural understanding. This was viewed as an important benefit of the program, with every student surveyed by the University of Manitoba commenting on the topic. For certain students this feature of the program may prove to be among its most important and lasting benefits. Through friendships, one learns about other societies, their conflicts and cultures, perspectives and conflict resolution methods, at much deeper and richer levels than is often possible from classroom experiences alone. Further, if citizens of North America are to be developed, networks of people must be developed across our boundaries, and thus being comfortable engaging people of the continent, whatever their nationality, is of paramount importance.

It is thus interesting that so many of the participants underscored the friendships made during the Program. One student from the University of Louisville traveled to Canada and later reflected: “it’s funny how being here for a few months, has helped me create the friendships of a lifetime”. This sentiment was echoed throughout the responses to the University of Manitoba surveys, with one Canadian participant noting that encountering people from different backgrounds while in Mexico helped him to “broaden his horizons”. He continued: “Meeting so many people, of so many different cultures, has

simply highlighted, underlined and capitalized just how similar and how different humans can be – no matter where you are from”. One woman from Manitoba, who traveled to the U.S., noted that she had been able to maintain friendships developed while on the exchange and that her personal life had been enriched via these friendships. She went on to say: “One of the most important benefits from my exchange is the amount I learnt from meeting so many new people, people who may be different from the type of person I would have normally gotten to know in Canada. It really showed me a lot about how to deal with kinds of people that I wasn’t necessarily used to, and to have much more patience and understanding”.

Discussion and Conclusions

Much remains to be done to promote cooperative university efforts to coordinate and develop the study and practice of CAR. Too few of our educational institutions in our respective countries are cooperating across national boundaries to exchange ideas and learn from one another, much less to reach a shared understanding of problems, or to formulate common North American strategies for resolving them. The qualitative data presented above illustrates the importance of exchange programs to the personal and professional development of students, to the faculties, the learning environment, and the internationalization policies of universities, and to the CAR field generally. Although the information we have related is based on a single exchange project, we believe that it is broadly indicative of student mobility projects in general, and we hope that it encourages other universities in our region and other regions to undertake their own mobilization projects in the conflict resolution and other fields of academic inquiry.

The value of the cultural immersion experience cannot be underestimated in today’s global village (Fry, 2006), where many issues are no longer confined within state borders and students in a wide variety of fields must have strong CAR skills. Not only does it clearly benefit students academically and personally, but it can be crucial for their developing careers. Students who have lived in other countries are more attractive candidates for a number of professions since their experiences demonstrate essential skills in today’s competitive job marketplace – adaptability, flexibility, language skills, knowledge of diversity, coping skills and sensitivity to other cultures (International Academic Mobility Program, 2005). Moreover, the development and honing of cross-cultural peacemaking skills critical to a person’s employability are exceedingly positive outcomes of such an exchange program. The job market, whether domestic or international, places a premium on searching out new employees who are flexible, capable of

adapting to change, who are bilingual and even multi-lingual, and who possess skills in team work, negotiation, problem solving, and cultural understanding. The academic experience of participating in a study abroad program focused on conflict resolution, paired with the cultural experience of living and working abroad, promoted the development of all of these skills.

Signal advances occurred at the institutional level as well. After much discussion and consultation among the partner institutions, various universities created courses, improving and adjusting their curricula to better promote and better explore the CAR field. The North American lens through which this conflict resolution program proceeded, paired with the support and input of faculty at partner institutions, brought certain faculty members to incorporate new emphases in their teaching: new readings, new case studies, and new pedagogies. Beyond this, the presence on campus, and especially in the classroom, of talented and motivated foreign students, intent on learning about conflict resolution, had extraordinarily positive repercussions for all the universities. This was commented on by faculty members and by participants preparing to travel abroad, and it affected positively countless other students, not otherwise involved in the program. Much the same could be said of the broader communities in which these students became engaged, especially in their practicum experiences. The organizations involved both gave to the student participants and received from them: benefits flowing reciprocally from the international students, with their fresh ideas, infectious enthusiasm, and different worldviews, to conflict resolution organizations, and vice versa.

Instituting a transnational exchange program also proved to be a valuable way to draw talented students into the study and practice of conflict resolution. In many cases students from other disciplines were attracted to this innovative and challenging program, and through their participation were made aware of the importance of CAR in complementing their skills and field of study. Students who participated in the NACRP clearly enriched their understanding of conflict and conflict resolution within North America, while gaining different, in-depth perspectives from studying the subject at foreign universities.

While we have not attempted to quantify the academic benefit of the program *per se*, students' perceptions of improvements in their academic ability through learning and working in another country are perhaps even more important than such measurable variables as increased knowledge of current events. Participants were exposed to new perspectives in the field and to broader but related disciplines. The program was a transforming experience in the sense that some students wanted to move on to conflict resolution, academically and professionally, after their participation.

Our findings strongly suggest that the effects of the exchange experience on students in terms of self-confidence, maturity, independence and sensitivity to other cultures were quite significant, though not easily quantified. Rich interaction with other cultures is important not only to one's personal growth and employability, but also to the prospects of building peace and social justice across North America. By providing for the immersion of students in another culture, the NACRP contributed to the preparation of future generations of leaders with useful backgrounds and skill sets and with heightened sensitivity to issues of social justice and a better understanding of cross-cultural issues. The graduates of this program, we trust, will be among those who will more easily dismiss the negative stereotypes that often play a role in the perpetuation of conflicts, whether they are personal, community- or nationally-based.

In the twenty-first century, North America's premier universities will be places not only for the contemplative research and study of regional concerns, but also for the design of solutions to intractable and far-reaching environmental, social, political and economic problems. For the six university partners of the North American Consortium for a Culture of Peace, the North American Conflict Resolution Program combined the academic elements of rigorous scholarship and innovative teaching, with the service elements of civic engagement and practical problem solving. It promoted deeper involvement by the academic community in encouraging more peaceful and prosperous multicultural societies. It also added a new dimension to our university programs – a vibrant intersection of cross-cultural thought and collective action among our campuses.

The participants, students and faculty alike, have contributed markedly to university life at home and abroad, combining their enthusiasm for this innovative opportunity, with their varied experiences in different cultures to further the learning process and to enrich and diversify the academic experience. In this way, the NACR program has promoted a new generation of North Americans who affirm a shared culture of peace and who strive to live in a common global space, assisting each other to transform conflicts pragmatically and nonviolently.

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**OUR DAY IN THEIR SHADOW:
CRITICAL REMEMBRANCE, FEMINIST SCIENCE AND THE
WOMEN OF THE MANHATTAN PROJECT**

Lee-Anne Broadhead

Abstract

Inspired by the publication of a book celebrating the role of the women in the Manhattan Project, this paper seeks to demonstrate that such an effort – to the extent it accepts and endorses the historical, political and scientific legitimacy of the Project – is both misguided and dangerous. An alternative feminist critique is presented: one respecting the views of those scientists (men and women) who refused to participate or who have sought to challenge the reductionist Western scientific paradigm from which the Bomb emerged. Illumination of the repressive and hierarchal structures requisite for the “birth” of the nuclear age is undertaken and views excised by the official narrative – the voices of wives, daughters and victims – are recalled. In constructing this “counter-narrative”, critical stress is laid on the multiple negative legacies of the Project and the positive requirement for humane, sustainable alternatives to the poisonous technologies often spawned by current forms of scientific inquiry.

Celebrating Weapons of Mass Destruction: A New Goal for Feminism?

It is not surprising that feminists do not share a monolithic view of nuclear weapons and their social, political, economic and environmental impact. Many feminists focus their research, and activist energies, on more immediate social justice issues – and some are more radical in their demands for institutional change. I have always celebrated the diversity of feminist opinion and opposed the contention that a common minimal definition of “feminist” could or should be articulated.

Nonetheless, in the months preceding the sixtieth anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atrocities, I found myself deeply troubled by, and constantly returning to, debates surrounding feminist science. I have long been drawn to those writers, feminist or otherwise, who argue that we must confront the very way we “do” science – i.e. critique its basic methods, techniques and objectives – in order to effectively challenge the often-disastrous consequences of its practice. Many feminist scholars, however, have been intent instead on celebrating the role of women (past and present)

in the profession, and to advance in this way the “cause” of equal participation by men and women in the scientific arena. While this access-oriented approach illuminates gender discrimination, it leaves unchallenged the pernicious (and socially destructive) gender constructions encoded in the mainstream scientific outlook. It was not until I read a volume by two nuclear physicists celebrating the role of women in the Manhattan Project that I began to reflect more systematically on the limitations, and potential dangers, of this way of thinking.

This book – *Their Day in the Sun* by physicists Ruth Howes and Caroline Herzenberg (1999) – makes explicit and amplifies the celebratory tone of other works highlighting the role of women (scientists and others) in the Manhattan Project (such as Fermi, 1954; Jette, 1977; Libby, 1979; Manley, 1990; Wilson and Serber, 1997). As is the case with these works, the study is unambivalently and unquestioningly supportive of the merits and supposed necessity of the enterprise, and studiously uncritical with regard to its broader, long-term impact. It also clutches at the fact that many of the quarter of a million people drawn into the secret production of the world’s most inhumane and indiscriminate weapon were women. In casting light on these women, Howes and Herzenberg (1999) hope to inspire greater numbers of young women to enter their chosen field of study. It is my contention that their effort leaves a great many others – both women and men whose actions are perhaps of greater inspirational value – in the shadows. More disturbingly, because of their tacit support for the project, their approach remains rooted in the shadow of the Bomb.

Howes and Herzenberg (1999, p. 1) urge their readers to “go on to examine additional aspects of this intriguing topic”. The following paper is a heartfelt acceptance of this challenge, setting the issue – women’s role in the making of the atomic bomb – in the broader context of debates over both the Manhattan Project as well as western science more generally. To widen the frame, I propose bringing a few people, representative of different groups, in from the shadows cast by the study’s selective searchlight. Such an investigation will, I trust, provide us with the opportunity to critically remember the origin and outcome of the Manhattan Project, allow us to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of feminist science, and, perhaps of greatest import, encourage us to resist the silencing of alternative views that occurs in a “writing out” of history which serves to stabilize a pro-nuclear weapon narrative.

Silencing Others to Celebrate the Science of Mass Destruction

For Howes and Herzenberg (1999) to make their basic arguments – that women contributed significantly to the Manhattan Project, and that this

success should generate a new-found enthusiasm in young women for science – they must establish the conditions allowing for a presentation of the enterprise as an unambiguous success. To do this, the many concerns that have been raised about the project (both at the time and with hindsight) must be silenced, either by dismissal or omission.

The list of “silenced others” should, given Howes and Herzenberg’s goal of casting light on participants they deem to have been ignored, begin with scientists whose voices might indeed inspire young women to think seriously about a career in science – but from a very different, anti-nuclear and anti-war, perspective. I have chosen to divide these scientists into two groups. First, the “refusniks” who spurned any involvement in the project itself and, secondly, the “transformists” who seek to affirm, as part of a broader political and social movement, a radical new vision of the basic constituents, methods and goals of western science. Between these categories, I will also give voice to the wives, daughters, scholars and survivors of the Manhattan Project whose dissenting views have also been silenced in order to depict the project as a model of successful scientific investigation or achievement.

The dense shadow of exclusion cast by *Their Day in the Sun* serves its purpose well, banishing or obscuring many awkward and critical themes; prominent among them, ironically, is the shroud of darkness in which the project itself was wrapped, i.e. the veil of ignorance in which the vast majority of project workers lived and laboured. As President Truman (1945) enthused, drawing the curtain on a smouldering Hiroshima:

We now have two great plants and many lesser works devoted to the production of atomic power. Employment during peak production numbered 125,000 and over 65,000 individuals are even now engaged in operating the plants. Many have worked there for two and a half years. Few know what they have been producing. They see great quantities of material going in and they see nothing coming out of those plants, for the physical size of the explosive charge is exceedingly small. We have spent two billion dollars on the greatest scientific gamble in history – and won.

Was it too much of a gamble for Herzenberg and Howes to honestly explore the implications of this basic facet of the project? Or did they calculate that doing so might cloud the celebratory clarity of their study, perhaps raising in the process questions about the transparency, independence and integrity of military-industrial “big science” in the post-1945 era? Should the women who unknowingly participated in the creation of the most lethal means of destruction in history be celebrated or pitied? Should they feel pride at the job completed or anger that their own government put them in such a position?

The sunny mood of the book would also, of course, be more than dampened by reference to the mounting evidence that the use of nuclear weapons in 1945 was unnecessary and illegal. Howes and Herzenberg are not

obliged to be persuaded by this evidence; but with a major scholarly debate in full spate, should they not at least present the case against the bombings alongside the one-dimensional official narrative which has occupied centre stage for so long? In terms of the project itself, we may be entitled to question the absence of the uncertain, contradictory, sometimes haunted voices of the women – wives, mothers and daughters – seemingly expected to remain in the background, loyally supporting their men. And where, finally, are the voices of the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki recounting their own dark day in the atomic sun? If Howes and Herzenberg are, as they appear, genuinely proud of the role of women in the delivery of such death and destruction, one might ask that they be prepared to confront the actual human (and environmental) consequences of “success”.

Resisting Temptation: The Scientists Who Said “No”

The celebration of Manhattan Project women – both the handful who knew what they were doing, and the multitude kept in the dark – stems from a determination to redress the neglect of women’s contribution to key scientific and technological enterprises. Many feminists believe that through the provision of worthy role-models we can best encourage young women to enter scientific professions. Howes and Herzenberg (1999) clearly locate their effort in this tradition but, for two main reasons, stand on shaky ground.

First, their claim that “the earliest books that came out about the Manhattan Project, including official histories, made no mention of contributions by female scientists and engineers” (Howes and Herzenberg, 1999, p. 1) is erroneous. It would be virtually impossible for any history of the development of the Bomb *not* to mention the “Founding Mothers”, as Howes and Herzenberg call them, of atomic physics. A cursory glance at some of the “earliest books” makes the case: three of the most popular and influential volumes published in the aftermath of World War II all praise the crucial pioneering role, experimental and theoretical, played by three women – Marie Curie, her daughter Irène Joliot-Curie, and Lise Meitner (Dietz, 1945; Laurence, 1946; Geddes *et al.*, 1945)

Second, while it is true that most books on the Manhattan Project do not cover the role of women extensively, neither do they document the contribution of the vast majority of men. To write an all-encompassing history of the venture, crediting the part played by every worker-in-the-dark, or even scientist-in-the-know, would be an impossible task. Howes and Herzenberg (1999, p. 199) correctly state that women scientists and technicians were “active in nearly every aspect of the project’s technical work”. As Margaret Rossiter (1995, p. 5) observes, however, there were around a dozen (“at least

eleven”) women working in the project’s inner circle by 1945, with only one (Leona Marshall Libby) active from the outset. In addition to exaggerating the deficit purportedly corrected by their study, Howes and Herzenberg misrepresent, or simply silence, the stand taken by a number of women scientists (including some whose science they exalt). Given their statement that researching the book was akin to detective work, they either missed some vital clues or repressed some crucial evidence.

Early in their book, Howes and Herzenberg (1999, p. 20) ponder: “why did women’s prominence in nuclear physics not carry over directly to the Manhattan Project? Why did the women who led the development of nuclear science in Europe not join their male counterparts as leaders of the effort to develop the atomic bomb?” Marie Curie died in 1934, but both Lise Meitner and Irène Joliot-Curie were at the height of their powers, and in the foremost ranks of their profession, at the outbreak of war. How do the authors account for their non-recruitment?

Meitner was sometimes handed the moniker of “mother of the bomb” for her enormous contribution to the detection and interpretation of nuclear fission (Sime, 1996, p. 315). Given her point-blank refusal to conduct war-work in the United States, or anywhere else, the label is grotesquely inappropriate. Mentioning her decision to remain in Stockholm, in precarious and lonely exile, Howes and Herzenberg (1999, p. 32) quote Meitner’s adamant statement: “I will have nothing to do with a bomb”. They then allow her presence, and anti-militaristic stance, to fade without trace from the ensuing celebration of military science.

Irène Joliot-Curie’s non-participation receives no attention, even though her case is well-documented and extremely instructive. When the Nazis invaded France, Irène and Frederic Joliot-Curie, her husband and scientific partner, decided to remain in Paris despite their well-known socialism, to both support the Resistance and obstruct any military research by the Germans at their renowned atomic laboratory. If Irène had decided to flee and join the Allied programme, her left-wing associations would almost certainly have cost her a security clearance, or at least consigned her into a backwater region of the Project, as happened to the Joliot-Curies’ two assistants, Hans von Halban and Lew Kowarski, following their escape from France (Weart, 1979). Her likely reception during the war, in fact, can be gauged from a subsequent episode: in 1948, Irène Curie arrived in the United States only to be detained by immigration officials because of her involvement in left-wing organizations (Weart, 1979)

My charge, in short, is that in the cases under review, Howes and Herzenberg refuse to engage or acknowledge significant dissenting voices ideally suited to illuminating the complexity of the issue. Indeed, their statement, early in the book, that women were attracted to work on the

Manhattan Project because the “rise of Nazi Germany and the growing documentation of genocide in Europe convinced most Americans that winning the war should outweigh any reluctance to work on weapons” minimizes the fact both that this was not an average weapons project, and that a leading nuclear physicist – in exile from fascism – knew precisely what the project was about and refused on moral grounds to associate herself with it. Instead, we read simply that “the women who had pioneered nuclear research were not available to the Manhattan Project” (Howes and Herzenberg, 1999, pp. 17, 34).

It is, of course, improbable that only high-profile cases exist of women scientists refusing to lend their hand to the making of the Bomb. Principled non-participation must have extended to lesser-known women able to appreciate the full horror of the new weapon. While unearthing their stories would indeed have required some dedicated scholarship, would the reward not have been a fuller, fairer and deeper study? And if such an admittedly broader investigation was, in the view of the authors, neither feasible nor necessary, then the dual-nature of their mandate should have been spelt out more clearly, not just to clarify the role of the women in question but also to defend the value of the enterprise itself.

A brief reference in Robert Jungk’s (1958) pathbreaking study of the making of the Bomb, *Brighter than a Thousand Suns*, provides a tantalizing glimpse into the anti-nuclear perspectives so sadly lacking from *Their Day in the Sun*. In a discussion on the ethics of modern scientific research, Jungk quotes an English crystallographer, Kathleen Lonsdale, arguing that “the risk that one’s work, though good in itself, may be misused must always be taken. But responsibility cannot be shirked if the known purpose is criminal or evil, however ordinary the work may be”. Jungk (1958, p. 261) continues: Only a few scientific investigators in the Western world have in fact acted on this principle. Their honesty obliged them to risk their professional future and face economic sacrifices with resolution. In some cases they actually renounced the career they had planned, as did one of Max Born’s young English assistants, Helen Smith. As soon as she heard of the atom bomb and its application, she decided to give up physics for jurisprudence.

Alas, Jungk (1958) gives no more details of Smith’s lonely act of conscientious objection; but he is surely right to attach significance, and accord respect, to her decision not to follow a career forever contaminated by the founding “mothers and fathers” of the Bomb. How many other Helen Smiths have there been? And how many more will there be if a deeper feminist critique of the history – and future – of western science continues to be marginalized?

It may seem unfair, as part of an effort to examine the role of women in this enterprise, to note that a number of male scientists shared Meitner’s explicit refusal to work on the new weapon. In seeking to balance the laudatory

tone of the study it is important to acknowledge that some men either struggled with their decision to participate in the project or declined involvement on moral grounds. Lawrence Badash (2005) recounts the case of Volney Wilson who initially declined but eventually joined after deciding it was his patriotic duty. Badash (2005) also reports that leading British physicist James Chadwick told him “a few” British scientists refused for humanitarian reasons. Similarly, Joseph Rotblat (1985) reports that Ludwick Wertenstein (a pupil of Marie Curie and a pioneer in the field of radioactivity) said he would never engage in the science of nuclear weapons. There are doubtless others whose stories of resistance have been largely silenced by the mainstream post-Hiroshima storytelling.

The case of Rotblat, who later became a leading advocate of nuclear disarmament, is also germane: initially convinced of the need to “deter” Hitler (a rationale he subsequently rejected), Rotblat left Los Alamos when it became clear the German push for the Bomb had failed (Rotblat, 1985). Rotblat’s post-Hiroshima decision to work only on science beneficial to humanity (medical radiology), while campaigning tirelessly for complete nuclear disarmament, provides a role model for young scientists (of either sex) far more valuable than the weapons scientists held high by Howes and Herzenberg.

Shadows and Blindfolds: Women Working in the Dark

Those few scientists who knew the details of the project possessed a luxury denied the vast majority of participants: human moral agency. Irrespective of whether one supports their decisions, they were at least taken in cognizance of main facts and issues. What is more difficult – and dubious – is to celebrate the role of individuals blind to the “big picture”; male and female cogs in the machine who became unwitting accomplices in an act of immeasurable moral and political consequence.

While acknowledging that almost all the women knew not what they did, Howes and Herzenberg (1999, p. 138). insist they simply “accepted the word of their supervisors that doing their job well would help to win the war”. While most certainly realized they were engaged in weapons work they were nonetheless ignorant of either its qualitatively unprecedented destructiveness or its revolutionary capacity to shape the post-war world. As Dwight MacDonald (1957, p. 175) wrote in the aftermath of the attacks:

It hardly needs to be stressed that there is something askew with a society in which vast numbers of citizens can be organized to create a horror like The Bomb without even knowing they are doing it. What real content, in such a case, can be assigned to notions like “democracy” and “government of, by and for the people”?

In 1939, Niels Bohr argued that the development of an atomic bomb was unlikely “unless you turn the United States into one huge factory”. He later maintained he had been correct, given the scale of the industrial effort involved (Rhodes, 1986, p. 294). But who would have believed that in a democratic country such an effort would be regarded as acceptable and worthwhile, birthing not only the atomic age but the “big science” era, umbilically linked to the military-industrial complex and increasingly remote from public and social concerns? As physicist Jerrold Zacharias (in Forman 1987, p. 152) has said: “World War II was in many ways a watershed for American science and scientists. It changed the nature of what it means to do science and radically altered the relationship between science and government ... the military ... and industry”. Young women in the process of choosing their careers are not oblivious to the fact that much of modern physics is in the service of the military. Those who support this state of affairs may indeed choose physics as their career path. Many others, however, will direct their attentions elsewhere.

The deformation of the discipline of physics by the Manhattan Project should be seen in a broader and darker context: the terrible toll exerted on American democracy. As Dieter Georgi (1985, p. 493) dramatically argued: “The most demonic success of Hitler was his ability to Hitlerize his enemies, sealed by two atomic bombs”. Others, of course, claimed the success of the project as proof of the superiority of democratic over totalitarian systems. For John Sembower (1945, p. 500), “There was no better wartime example of the democracies beating the totalitarians at their own game than the perfection of the atomic bomb”:

In a sense we have eaten our cake, and have it too! We chose to develop the atomic bomb by means which we consider legitimate within the framework of our institutions. The totalitarians, fired by a desire no greater than ours to lay hands on the weapon of our time, would have used any device regardless of the effect on individuals or institutions. Once more we decided that the end, however urgent or vital, does not justify the means of tyranny. Thus we may already have laid one chain of restraint about the atomic Frankenstein. We did not even let the prized promise of the atomic bomb make us totalitarian.

This myth is only sustained, however, by evading the designedly undemocratic organization of the project. Not only was the vast majority of the workforce (and management) in the dark, so was vice-president Truman and almost all of the Congress. As Barton J. Bernstein (1995, p. 138) notes:

The Manhattan Project, costing nearly \$2 billion, had been kept secret from most cabinet members and nearly all of Congress. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, a trusted Republican, and General George C. Marshall, the equally respected army chief of staff, disclosed the project to only a few congressional leaders. They smuggled the necessary appropriations into the War Department

budget without the knowledge – much less the scrutiny – of most congressmen, including most members of the key appropriations committees.

Many Americans embraced the project not primarily as a vindication of the “democratic” system, which it palpably was not, but simply as the necessary means to a vital end: swiftly ending a brutal conflict. This belief, however, is supportable only on the basis of a partial, prejudiced and semi-silenced historical record.

Re-Running the Black and White Movie: Silencing the Historical Record

While it may be psychologically necessary for those who (often unwittingly) played a role in the creation of nuclear weapons to accept the distortions and myth-making central to the government’s justification, one expects a higher standard from researchers dealing with the many complexities and disputes over the development and use of the Bomb. Howes and Herzenberg are not required to produce a general political history of the Manhattan Project. In order to valorize the role of the women involved, however, they *are* required to repeat and support the official narrative about the ending of the war.

At this remove – and after six decades of official Hiroshima mythmaking – it is difficult to appreciate that initial American public support for the bombings was *not* a given. It was, in fact, with some difficulty that the Truman administration sought to establish a heroic, irreproachable narrative sufficient to defuse the shock, disgust and concern of religious leaders, scientists (including some who had participated in the project), and public personalities from all walks of life.

University of Chicago Chancellor Robert M. Hutchins, for example, argued in the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that, “All the evidence points to the fact that the use of this bomb was unnecessary” and that America had thereby “lost its moral prestige” (in Lifton and Mitchell, 1995, p. 25). The *New York Herald Tribune* found “no satisfaction in the thought that an American air crew had produced what must without doubt be the greatest simultaneous slaughter in the whole history of mankind” (in Lifton and Mitchell, 1995, p. 25). John Haynes Holmes of the Community Church of New York argued that the use of the weapons was “the supreme atrocity of the ages ... a crime which we would instantly have recognized as such had Germany and not our own country been guilty of the act” (see Boyer, 1985, p. 200). And it was not just prominent figures who were outraged. In a letter to the editor of *Time*, Walter G. Taylor wrote on August 27, 1945, that with the atomic bombings the United States had “become the new master of brutality, infamy, atrocity. Bataan, Buchenwald, Cacao, Coventry, Lidice were tea

parties compared with the horror which we ... have dumped on the world ... No peacetime applications of this Frankenstein monster can ever erase the crime we have committed" (in Boyer, 1985, p. 197).

Of course there were many people who, despising an indisputably brutal enemy and believing themselves suddenly "saved" by the Bomb, felt no such anguish. The point I wish to make is that serious public divisions forced the administration into a defense of its decision based on deliberate distortions, exaggerations and suppression of evidence. And in this, alas, they largely succeeded.

Let us begin with the most important element of the official version: that the use of the weapons was based on no other diplomatic, military or political considerations than obtaining a timely unconditional surrender from the Japanese. There are two aspects to this question, neither of which are treated even superficially in *Their Day in the Sun*: did the bombings deal an unavoidable, necessary blow to the Japanese system, sufficient to induce a speedy capitulation; and was there another, secret motivation behind the attacks?

The first claim rests on two presumptions: (a) the reception and rejection by Japan of a fair, clear warning of an imminent attack of unprecedented magnitude, and (b) a profound Japanese disinterest, pre-Hiroshima, in offering a final surrender. This case can only be made by ignoring, for example, the fact that Ralph Bard, Under-Secretary of State of the Navy, resigned precisely because he did not believe that Japan had been warned appropriately and, as important, that the empire had already been defeated.

With regard to the broader issue of motivation, many of the key players have left a record sufficient to cast doubt on their own case. Despite his paranoiac devotion to secrecy, General Leslie Groves, the project's military director, had loose enough lips over Los Alamos dinner tables to discuss with scientists the importance of using the bomb before the end of the war in an effort to "subdue the Soviets" (Rotblat, 1985, p. 18). James Byrnes, Truman's Secretary of State, told Leo Szilard that "possessing and demonstrating the bomb would make Russia more manageable in Europe" (Lifton and Mitchell, 1995, p. 137). One of the leading British physicists on the Project, P. M. S. Blackett, wrote in 1949 that the decision to use the bomb had been "not so much the last military act of the second World War, as the first act of the cold diplomatic war with Russia" (Blackett, quoted in Lifton and Mitchell, 1995, p. 271). And another Los Alamos scientist, the American Philip Morrison (1949, p. 40), suggested that the "mysterious final date which we, who had the daily technical job of readying the bomb, had to meet at whatever cost in risk or money or good development ... is hard to explain except by Blackett's thesis".

The question of whether the Bomb should have been dropped is inextricably linked in the official narrative with how many lives, particularly American lives, its use saved through obviation of a land invasion of Japan. This is a claim that Howes and Herzenberg (1999, p. 183) appear to uncritically accept when they posit that, “For many Manhattan Project women, a sense of responsibility for the weapon they had helped to create accompanied the pride they took in the work, but most, like most Americans in general, seem to have felt that the creation of the atomic bomb had been necessary”. They quote Leona Marshall Libby’s son as saying that Libby had herself believed that the use of the weapon had “saved a lot of lives, with the invasion casualties estimated [at] at least a half-million people” (p. 183). As Lifton and Mitchell (1995) note, Truman did not make this claim in his first statement justifying the attack on Hiroshima. It was only after the intense domestic wave of horror and outrage – occurring despite the systematic “lock-down” of damaging information about the bombings – that the “saving lives” mantra took centre stage.

Over the years, the number of lives purportedly saved has become the gift that keeps on giving. In a hugely influential February 1947 article in *Harper’s Magazine* – widely-regarded as the definitive statement of the administration’s agreed position – Secretary of War Stimson placed the number of American casualties at 1 million. Right-wing journalist Wm. F. Buckley later set it as high as 2 million and *USA Today* columnist Tony Snow placed it at an incredible 6 million during the 50th anniversary debate in 1995, describing the figure, matching the death toll from the Nazi Holocaust, as “the consensus view” (Lifton and Mitchell, 1995, pp. 285-288). But based on the archival record the scholarly consensus, as Walker (1995, p. 321) points out, is that the number of American lives saved “even in the worse case, would have been in the range of tens of thousands rather than hundreds of thousands”.

Stimson’s *Harpers* article contended that while the Bomb was “a new and tremendously powerful explosive”, it was nonetheless “as legitimate as any other of the deadly explosive weapons of modern war” (Stimson, 1947, p. 98). Both private comments and public statements by Truman, however, belie this claim. At a meeting with advisors in July 1948, the President described the weapon as “destructive beyond anything we have ever had. You have to understand that this isn’t a military weapon. It is used to wipe out women and children and unarmed people, and not for military uses. So we have got to treat this differently from rifles and cannons and ordinary things like that” (in Lifton and Mitchell, 1995, p. 182). In a diary kept during the Potsdam Conference, Truman wondered if the Bomb “may be the fire destruction prophesied in the Euphrates Valley Era, after Noah and his fabulous ark”, expressing his fear that “machines are ahead of morals by some centuries and when morals catch up

perhaps there'll [be] no reason for any of it. I hope not, but we are only termites on a planet and maybe when we bore too deeply into the planet there'll [be] a reckoning – who knows?" (in Bernstein, 1980, pp. 33-34). And in a bout of public honesty – and one, surprisingly, little reported on – Truman referred to the attacks as “the wholesale slaughter of human beings”, many of them “women, children, and [other] noncombatants” (in Bernstein, 1998, p. 559).

In many ways all the claims of the official narrative are irrelevant given the impermissibility under international law of deliberately targeting civilians in wartime. In taking the decision to develop the atomic bomb – by its very nature an indiscriminate weapon – the United States government undermined its commitment to the prohibition against the targeting of civilian populations evidenced by its ratification of the Convention with Respect to the Laws and Customs of War on Land (1902, 1907) and its support for the Rules of Aerial Warfare (1923). Many of those who justify this *volte face* do so on the non-legal grounds that the conflict had become a “total war”, despite Roosevelt’s 1939 appeal not to attack civilian populations. Such apologists point to the lower death toll in Hiroshima than, say, the massive fire raids on Tokyo a few months earlier. But the fact that the attacks that laid the platform for Hiroshima and Nagasaki were indisputably illegal does not mean that the atomic bombings were not; and, for all their horror and destructiveness, the fire raids were different and lesser in both degree (casualties inflicted from a single munition) and kind (radiation sickness) from the uranium and plutonium weapons.

Paul Tibbets, the pilot of the *Enola Gay* – the plane, named after his mother, which dropped the “Little Boy” bomb on Hiroshima – has reminisced about his own role in the event. Recounting his discussion with General Ent in advance of the mission, Tibbets perhaps reveals more than he should about American military views on the weapon’s dubious legality. Tibbets reports Ent saying, “Paul, be careful how you treat this responsibility, because if you’re successful you’ll probably be called a hero. And if you’re unsuccessful, you might wind up in prison” (in Terkel, 2002). Ent clearly shared the perspective of Manhattan Project physicist Leo Szilard, who argued:

Let me say only this much to the moral issue involved: Suppose Germany had developed two bombs before we had any bombs. And suppose Germany had dropped one bomb, say, on Rochester and the other on Buffalo, and then having run out of bombs she would have lost the war. Can anyone doubt that we would then have defined the dropping of atomic bombs on cities as a war crime, and that we would have sentenced the Germans who were guilty of this crime to death at Nuremberg and hanged them? (Szilard, 1960)

Tibbets, however, never let his conscience become cluttered by the tenets of the Geneva Conventions: “You’re gonna kill innocent people at the same time, but we’ve never fought a damn war anywhere in the world where they didn’t kill innocent people. If the newspapers would just cut out the shit:

‘You’ve killed so many civilians.’ That’s their tough luck for being there” (in Terkel, 2002).

Such callous disregard for human life is disturbing when it comes from the participants in such actions; but the tacit acceptance that the use of these weapons was valid and legal on the part of feminists seeking to encourage more women to enter science is nothing short of shocking.

Other Voices Worth Hearing: Wives and Daughters

The Manhattan Project wives have long been visible through their own writings and now, increasingly, are being viewed through the lenses of researchers. In *Their Day in the Sun*, the wives are deployed to lighten the atmosphere and express support for their husbands, the project, and the Bomb. Laura Fermi’s (1954) reminiscences are drawn on to contribute humorous anecdotes and to recall the seriousness with which their husbands received the news of the attack on Hiroshima. An extraordinary quote from Fritz Matthias’ wife is used to justify the bombings: “I couldn’t help but believe that God, wearying of this long and tortuous war, had finally, reluctantly, given us this terrible weapon with which to end it”. Lilli Hornig is given voice to suggest that there really was not much discussion of the ethics of using the bomb – despite the fact she also remembered signing a petition supporting a demonstration blast (Howes and Herzenberg, 1999, pp. 184-185).

It is impossible to tell how selective Howes and Herzenberg have been in their recounting without access to the interview transcripts. What we do know is that in other works – even by women sharing the goal of highlighting women’s contributions to the project – greater scope is given to mixed feelings and moral doubt. Kathleen Manley, for instance – whose mother worked on the project at Los Alamos – records the widespread disquiet felt by many of the wives alongside a generally uncritical presentation of events and rationales. In a typical example, she quotes Jane Wilson as saying: “We had no shame for the bomb then, which a lot of us had afterwards” (Manley, 1990). Howes and Herzenberg cite Wilson’s earlier book – but fail to mention this change of heart.

A Wife and Mother: Phyllis Fisher

The case of Phyllis Fisher – author of *Los Alamos Experience* (1985) and wife of Leon Fisher, a member of Luis Alvarez’s plutonium-detonator team – shows even more clearly the selectiveness of Howes and Herzenberg’s treatment of the wives’ perspectives. While her memoir is replete with

feelings of guilt and dismay at the outcome of the project, she is summoned in *Their Day in the Sun* only to recount her realization “that that the colored cylinders her husband had brought home as children’s toys were the casings from parts for the bomb. She had strung them together to make Christmas ornaments” (Howes and Herzenberg, 1999, p. 185). For Howes and Herzenberg, this anecdote is a quaint and humorous vignette. For Fisher (1985, p. 128), it set in stark relief the inhumanity of the Project against the importance of natural life:

Detonators? Suddenly I remembered the box of hollow cylinders made of brightly colored plastic. They were not needed at the lab, so Leon had brought them home for Bobby to play with. They were red and green, as I recall. Bobby hadn’t shown much interest in them. So I appropriated the small cylinders and, stringing them together, laced them through evergreen branches and made a colorful ornament out of them.

Now really curious, I asked, “where those—?”

“Yes, they were!” he replied before I finished my sentence.

What ironic mixed symbolism! The evergreen branches, a reminder of life’s renewal had been trimmed with detonator casings, messengers of death! Ignorance had sanctioned that strange combination. No wonder Leon winced when he saw the detonator decoration. No longer did I think that Leon was really unreasonable when he insisted that I take my creation apart.

One of the strengths of Fisher’s work is its critique of the police-state bureaucratization of Los Alamos life. While other wives, for example, lament or satirize the endless inconveniences and indignities of project secrecy (barbed wire fences, mounted police controls, censorship, constant surveillance, etc.), Fisher (1985, pp. 39-40) goes further: “I began to suspect that *we* were the prisoners, the dangerous ones, and that ‘they’ were the safe ones outside. Why? Well, what sort of people are fingerprinted, photographed, and required to identify body scars upon arrival? We were! Who had mail censored? We did!” She adds: “The suspicion that *we* were considered the threat or the danger to the outside world added a Kafkaesque, dream-like quality to our existence on the hill”. And in a further literary analogy, she develops her subversive theme of Los Alamos as *nightmare*, symbol and symptom of a very modern disease:

In the fall of 1945, Los Alamos was no imaginary retreat from the realities of life in our troubled world. Rather, we represented in a microcosm, the viewpoints of many parts of our civilization. Maybe we were more like the patients in the tuberculosis sanitarium described by Thomas Mann in *The Magic Mountain*. These hospitalized patients on their “magic mountain” debated and theorized in their splendid isolation, while surrounded by beautiful scenery. As they argued, the countries below their mountain were

preparing for World War I, which suddenly exploded all around their sanctuary. Were we doing the same thing? (Fisher, 1985, pp. 147-148)

Fisher, in sum, paints a vivid picture of the scientists, their families, and their willingness to relinquish to an unnatural social environment the fundamental rights and responsibilities of moral agency. And while recounting her relief at the success of the long project, she also reflects on the “birth of this monster” and her fears for the future. Fisher surely deserves more than a fleeting, decorative appearance in any serious study of Manhattan Project women.

A Daughter: Mary Palevsky

Some children of Manhattan Project scientists have reflected on the enduring impact – personal, social and scientific – of the enterprise. Mary Palevsky’s (2000) book *Atomic Fragments: A Daughter’s Questions* explores the complicated, sometimes anguished feelings of scientists (including both her parents) who knowingly contributed to the birth of the Bomb.

Palevsky offers her own reflections alongside the reminiscences of seven high-profile participants. Her work stands as a valuable enrichment of the literature for two main reasons. First, she insists on using her own voice in an academic work, thus encouraging *us* to engage personally with the issue: to wrestle with our conscience, examine our assumptions and responsibility, etc. In insisting on her presence – essential, she believed, to reflect meaningfully on her parents’ own reflective struggle – Palevsky (2003) was “well aware that the personal, literary, and narrative voices in academic studies have traditionally been seen as unscientific, “feminine”, soft, and emotional”. With this pervasive prejudice in mind, she gently urges the reader to accept that the real impact of the Manhattan Project has been felt – by participants, citizens and victims – on many levels, and that the topic cannot accurately be considered as a coolly detached subject of inquiry.

Second, Palevsky (2000, p. x) invites the scientists themselves to reflect on the moral complexities of their actions. While motivated by a respectful desire to understand, her questions nonetheless push her interlocutors beyond the platitudes and disclaimers usually offered, thus allowing fresh insight into the “ways in which individual scientists made choices about the bomb and made sense of their work”.

Palevsky is not the only daughter of Manhattan scientists to grapple with the legacy of the project, but her engagement is, to date, the most comprehensive and satisfying. It is to be hoped that similar reflections follow – not least because the voices of *all* those affected deserve to be heard by young women reflecting on possible career paths.

The Language of the Dead: The Forgotten Legacy of the Bomb

Of central import in the long list of those silenced by the official narrative are the victims of the atomic attacks and being silenced has been a part of their “death-in-life” (Lifton, 1967) since the moment of the explosion. Kenzaburo Oe notes the pervasive “*silence* of the citizens following the bombing. The great mysterious monster conquered the city in an instant. Was it unnatural that the basic reaction of the people, injured and demoralized, was stunned silence?” (Oe, 1981, p. 175). “No words”, Mitsuko Hatano (1978, p. 176) has written, “can describe the horrors and suffering we witnessed on that day and on succeeding days”. The irretrievable silence of the vanished, however, *can* be partially reclaimed by the voices of the survivors, the hibakusha. In the words of Rinjiō Sodei (1995, p. 1121), “we should listen to the voice of the survivors. Their concern is not about the past, but rather about the past as prologue to the future”.

The guardians and preservers of the official narrative have long ignored, and at times suppressed, these voices. From the censorship of horrifying accounts and images of the attacks through to those scholars who deny the cancerous reality while elevating the functionaries who produced it, the silencing of victims goes on.

How, after all, to celebrate *anyone*’s role in this?

All of them were burned or injured. Stricken with anxiety and fear, they walked on helplessly, aimlessly pushed by the great surge behind them. Some exhausted people fell by the wayside but no one thought of coming to their aid. Those with remaining strength plodded on, mute and thoughtless. The wind carried their pungent, infernal stench up the river. (Mori, 1978, p. 156)

Outside I saw people dragging what at first looked like white cloth but what I later saw was skin that had peeled from their bodies ... Before long, all my husband’s hair fell out. His face turned ashen pale. He bled from the nose, the mouth, and the anus and ran a high temperature. I tried to cool his forehead with water ... he died in an agony I could hardly bear to witness. (Izuhiro 1978, pp. 162-13)

Occasionally half-naked, blood-covered men emerged from the wall of flames. Like ghosts they scurried about in search of safety. Some of them had been exposed to powerful radiation. As they outstretched limp hands, the skin peeled off and hung from their fingernails. Blood oozed from raw flesh exposed by monstrous burns. None of them made a sound. They were too stunned to weep or cry out. (Matsumuro, 1978, p. 165)

... the dead were too numerous for the living to attend to. (Hatano, 1978, p. 177)

For comparison, a voice from another world, a woman recalling her “day in the sun”: “I was put to work in a lab with a real project of my own, and just loved what I was doing. Challenges came along daily; it was fun solving them and getting answers. I was only a bit player in the science of the Manhattan Project, but I was a player” (Weaver in Howes and Herzenberg, 1999, p. vii)

It is true and fair that those participating in the Manhattan Project should speak for themselves; but *not* without hearing the voices they destroyed, the silence they “created”.

Denying the Faustian Urge: A New Science

“It is quite abnormal”, Kenzaburo Oe (1981, p. 117) has written, “that people in one city should decide to drop an atomic bomb on people in another city. The scientists involved cannot possibly have lacked the ability to imagine the hell that would issue from the explosion”. By describing the Bomb as at once “a savagely primitive demon and a most modern curse”, Oe (1981, p. 114) invites us to explore both the contemporary construction and deep roots, cultural and psychic, of the moral blindness which culminated in the use of the Bomb.

We have all heard the inseparable refrains “science is just a method” and “the problem isn’t science but the social use of science”. Science thus delimited is simply a neutral, objective, disinterested, value-free method of inquiry. But is the case this plain?

If we examine the development and use of the atomic bomb, a far more complex and realistic picture emerges. As the work drew to a close, a number of scientists began to question the use of the weapons against Japan. Only one, Rotblat, walked away; others took a stand inside the system. Led by Szilard, scientists at Chicago’s Metallurgical Lab argued in a petition to the President that American leadership of the post-war world, dependent on the humane exercise of its “moral responsibilities”, would be irretrievably compromised by cold-blooded use of the Bomb. In 1962, Edward Teller (pp. 13-14) recounted seeking advice on the petition from Robert Oppenheimer, the project’s scientific director:

Oppenheimer told me, in a polite and convincing way, that he thought it improper for a scientist to use his prestige as a platform for political pronouncements. He conveyed to me in glowing terms the deep concern, thoroughness, and wisdom with which these questions were being handled in Washington ... [His] words lifted a great weight from my heart. I was happy to

accept his word and his authority. I did not circulate Szilard's petition [at Los Alamos]. Today I regret that I did not.

Interviewed by Palevsky, Teller, while confirming his feelings of "relief" that he "did not have to take any action on a matter as difficult as deciding how the bomb should be employed", criticized Oppenheimer for a glaring double-standard: offering advice to the military (as a member of the Targeting Committee) while denying input to those who opposed the decision (Palevsky, 2000, pp. 42-44). Pressed on the complex lessons of his experience, Teller then sings Palevsky the old party line: "Look, the scientists, by giving you the tools, are not responsible for the use of these tools" (Teller in Palevsky, 2000, p. 55).

In the wake of the attack on Hiroshima, social critic Dwight MacDonald (1957, pp. 171, 174-175) argued that "perhaps only among men like soldiers and scientists, trained to think 'objectively' – i.e., in terms of means, not ends – could such irresponsibility and moral callousness be found". He continued: the effect on me, at least, was to intensify some growing doubts about the "Scientific Progress" which has whelped this monster. Last April, I noted that in our movies the white coat of the scientist is as blood-chilling a sight as Dracula's black cape ... If the scientist's laboratory has acquired in Popular Culture a ghastly atmosphere, is this not perhaps one of those deep intuitions of the masses? From Frankenstein's laboratory to Maidanek (or, now, to Hanford and Oak Ridge) is not a long journey. Was there a popular suspicion, perhaps only half conscious, that the 19th century trust in science was mistaken..? These questions seem more and more relevant. I doubt if we shall get satisfactory answers from the scientists (who, indeed, seem professionally incapable even of asking, let alone answering, them).

Why is it that the scientists, historians and politicians who praise the "success" of the Manhattan Project are unable to even contemplate such a critique of the notion of *scientific progress*, let alone consider the possibility that a very different science is possible?

Many schools of thought have challenged the prevailing western scientific worldview. The social theorists of the Frankfurt School, indigenous science writers and concerned scientists from within the western tradition could all be marshaled against the reductionist method and its "logical" culmination in the mushroom cloud. Given our specific theme, however – the women of the Manhattan Project and their elevation to feminist role models – we should listen first to the critique of a very different group of feminist scholars.

There can be no doubt that women are as capable of men in succeeding in all fields of contemporary scientific inquiry. And many women (often self-identified feminists) are content to fight for equal access to all those sites – including the innumerable weapons labs, nuclear and otherwise, of the post-Manhattan military-industrial complex. But should this really be the goal? If so, Helen Smith was perhaps correct to sense the irrevocable contamination of *all*

science from the violent application of atomic physics. But might a modern-day Smith take heart from the growing number of scholars intent on puncturing the claims of a purportedly neutral, value-free science and exploring the scope for an authentically “new”, creative and holistic, approach?

Might such a young woman be intrigued, for example, by Carolyn Merchant’s demonstration, in *The Death of Nature* (1980), of the profound linkages between modern science and the exploitation of both nature and women? In charting the transformation of the dominant western view of the cosmos from organism to machine, Merchant calls into question the political, ecological, philosophical and indeed scientific implications “naturally” arising from the reductionist dogma. Merchant’s (1980) inquiry into the reconstruction of nature as “dead and passive, to be dominated and controlled by humans” simultaneously creates space to consider “a new world view that could guide twenty-first-century citizens in an ecologically sustainable way of life”.

With the origins of the mechanistic worldview thus illumined, might our young woman proceed to dig deeper into the cornerstone claim of scientific value-neutrality – and be drawn in the process to the pedagogical conviction of physicist Karen Barad (1995) that, rather than presenting the world of science “as it is”, messages are sent to students “not only by what we say but also by what we don’t bother saying”. Or might they be, likewise, inspired by Vandana Shiva’s (1988) piercing critique of the violent, value-laden quality of reductionist inquiry? Shiva, though herself holding a Ph.D. in physics, stands very much on the margins of mainstream science. What is desperately needed is an increase in the number of scientists – men and women – advocating a basic alteration in the way we view the natural and social world, who challenge the fallacy, and transcend the stunted practice, of a supposedly neutral approach. As Londa Schiebinger (1997, p. 211) has argued, “change for women within the sciences ... is a complex and broadly social process. It is not uniquely women, but women *and* men with a critical awareness of gender, who are the agents of that change”.

Conclusions

In critiquing the approach taken in *Their Day in the Sun*, I have sought to sketch an alternative feminist outline of the Manhattan Project, one respecting the views of those women and men who refused to participate while illuminating the repressive and hierarchal structures requisite for “success”. In addition I have included the voices excised by the official narrative, stressed the multiple negative legacies of the project and pointed to the search for workable, sustainable alternatives to the science and technologies of reductionist violence.

Such a perspective can only be rooted in a critique of the pseudo “objectivity” generating the modern scientific denial of its own social

construction and responsibility. It is *this* category of feminist science that we can learn from, one disavowing the Manhattan Project as anything to be proud of, saluting the example of the men and women who refused to “birth” the monster, and seeking a new, humane science (drawing on non-Western as well as repressed Western traditions) as a vital element in the search for peace and survival in the nuclear age.

Attempts to draw women into the scientific professions by pointing to instances where they participated in major military-industrial endeavours is foolhardy. If we want *everyone* to benefit from science then we need to rethink science itself. As a starting point, we can at least encourage a commitment to the argument that scientific inquiry be grounded in serious reflection on its social implications. Those who celebrate, for whatever broader purpose, scientific “successes” in the development of weapons of mass destruction are not taking even the smallest of steps in this direction. In shining positive light on those women who participated in the Manhattan Project (most of them, in effect, blindfolded), new shadows are cast on those seeking a world in which intellectual inquiry is used to create rather than destroy.

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COMMUNITY RELATIONS WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN VUKOVAR, CROATIA: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY IN COEXISTENCE BUILDING

Ankica Kosic and Sean Byrne

Abstract

This article discusses the role of non-governmental organizations in promoting peace education, coexistence, reconciliation and dialogue among young people in Vukovar, Croatia. We argue that reconciliation cannot be imposed from above, but must be built, nurtured and sustained from the bottom-up. Much of this work of dialogue building is carried out at the community level by grassroots organizations. We describe the types of civic organizations, the peacebuilding approaches used, as well as the sustainability, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and barriers for youth participation in these organizations. A number of in-depth interviews were conducted with representatives of civic organizations in Vukovar. Moreover, the methodology involved an analysis of programs and activities promoted by the community organizations. Findings illustrate that different strategies and activities are used by community organizations, which involve a relatively small number of participants and which do not have a developmental plan to follow young people after the termination of a project.

Introduction

This study explores the role of civic organizations in promoting inter-group dialogue among young people in Vukovar, Croatia. We describe the types of civic organizations in this context, and the opportunities and barriers toward civic participation in Vukovar, a small city in Eastern Slavonia close to the Serbian border. Soon after Croatia proclaimed independence from Yugoslavia in June 1991, conflicts escalated in those areas of Croatia populated by a large percentage of Serbs. Nationalist leaders such as Franjo Tuđman in Croatia, and Slobodan Milošević in Serbia, were not motivated to create political and socio-economic reforms in the former Yugoslavia in a peaceful way (Bennett, 1995; Cvii, 1996; Maass, 1996; Zagar, 2000). Milošević, with the support of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA), sought to encourage the efforts of the rebel Serb communities to secede from an independent Croatia. The JNA leadership also aimed to decisively cripple or

overthrow the new Croatian state. A key element in this plan was the use of military forces to capture the Serb-populated region of Eastern Slavonia, and then to advance west from there to Zagreb, the capital city of Croatia, putting Croatia under military occupation (Kadijević, 1993). Militant propaganda from both Belgrade and Zagreb added to the tension, radicalizing many of the local population and encouraging each side to view the other in the worst possible light (Sremac, 1999; Thompson, 1999).

The city of Vukovar underwent a three month siege in 1991 by the JNA, supported by Serbian paramilitary forces (Sikavica, 1995). The city was almost completely destroyed and the majority of the Croatian population was forced to flee (Cohen, 1998; Daalder, 1996; Zagar, 2000). Fighting in this town alone accounted for over 2500 dead (Silber and Little, 1997). The city fell to Serbian forces on November 18, 1991, and most of the non-Serb civilian survivors were expelled to other parts of Croatia. Approximately 800 men of fighting age were imprisoned in Serbian prisons. Many of the Croatian patients in the Vukovar hospital (around 260 people) were taken by Serb paramilitary forces to a nearby field of Ovčara and executed there. In 2005, Serbian courts sentenced 14 former militiamen to jail terms of up to 20 years for the killing of at least 200 prisoners of war seized at the Vukovar hospital.

Serbian authorities ruled the territory of the self-declared *Republika Srpska Krajina* (RSK) until November 1995, when as part of the Dayton process, Eastern Slavonia was reintegrated into Croatia with the Erdut Agreement. The Agreement outlined the terms of a twelve month period of transition under the control of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES) during which time between sixty and eighty thousand Croats, expelled from the Eastern Croatia Region between 1991 and 1995 returned to their homes (OSCE, 2002). In January 1998, UNTAES left and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) remained as a monitoring mission.

Vukovar itself was inhabited by approximately 40,000 people at the beginning of 1991. It is estimated that there were more than 25 ethnic groups and at least ten religious groups in the region. Croats constituted 52.9 percent of the city's population, and Serbs constituted 37.4 percent with Hungarians, Slovaks, Ukrainians, and not declared making up the remainder (Zagar, 2000). Prior to 1990, the town's population was characterized by a high percentage of mixed marriages. It was estimated that at least 80 percent of the population had at least one first or second generation relative of another ethnicity (Zagar, 2000). In Croatia, Serbs and Croats lived in mixed communities, sharing schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods (Cardzic and Byrne, 2007). Rural villages were more ethnically homogenous, and in these areas the interaction between Serbs and Croats was limited usually to the work and trade spheres (Judah, 1997; Thomas, 1999).

Possibilities for Inter-Group Reconciliation in Vukovar

According to the last census conducted in 2001 by the Croatian Institute for Statistics (<http://www.dzs.hr/>), the city's registered population was 31,670, consisting of 57.5 percent ethnic Croats and 32.9 percent ethnic Serbs. Thirteen years after the signing of the Dayton Agreement, it is still difficult to reconstruct multiethnic communities in this war-torn region. In the present situation in Vukovar, most Croats and Serbs work in different places, frequent separate shops, café bars, and primary schools. Since 2005, secondary schools are semi-integrated, in the sense that youth belonging to different ethnic groups have been going to the same schools but attending separate classes. In Serbian classes, the whole teaching program is implemented in the Serbian language, and students are also required to learn the Croatian language and alphabet.

The ethnic conflict left a legacy of anger, bitterness, and hatred among the belligerent groups that is difficult to dissolve (Byrne, McCloud and Polkinghorn, 2004). Children and youth are particularly unable to protect themselves from the effects of trauma, and the trauma experienced by adults is transmitted to the next generation (Polkinghorn and Byrne, 2001). Children and youth living and growing up in families with war experience are subject to attitudes and prejudices along the ethnic lines of their parents that fill them with hatred (OSCE, 2002; Tauber, 2004). There are few opportunities for children and youth to find other positive role models, ask for help, and express their problems and how to deal with them (Senehi and Byrne, 2006). Many young people are characterized by depression, passivity, apathy; some become embedded in the drink culture and some display aggressive behavior.

In 2003, a National Program of Action for Youth was adopted by the Government of Croatia, which includes the fundamental principles of government policy toward youth, the strategy of policy implementation, and the action plan of the program (The State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth Croatia, 2003). The Program emphasized that satisfactory democratic transformation depends to a great extent on the degree of youth inclusion in the actual socio-economic and political processes in Croatian society.

In 2000, the Program of Cooperation between the Croatian Government, the non-governmental and non-profit sector was defined. Volunteerism is not particularly valued, and people are unwilling to volunteer, despite a high level of unemployment, a lack of activities, as well as the opportunity to obtain new knowledge and skills through volunteering. Croatian legislation does not recognize the idea and contribution of volunteer work, and the Government

has not ratified the Convention on the promotion of International Long-Term Youth Volunteer Work, of the Council of Europe. The status of foreign volunteers in Croatia has not yet been resolved because their work is considered to be another form of work according to the Employment of Foreigners Act. Non-governmental groups and associations of, and, for youth, as well as the third sector as a whole, are a relatively new phenomenon in Croatia. In 2007, there were approximately 360 associations registered in Croatia dealing with children and youth.

Community Empowerment, Capacity Building and Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a multi-faceted idea built on truth, mercy, justice, and peace (Lederach, 1997, 1999). Ryan (2007, p. 82) argues that the key elements of reconciliation are, “investigation, recognition of victims, closure, restitution, forgiveness and amnesty”; Lederach’s (1997) definition of reconciliation involves an integrative model of interpersonal and structural transformational and peacebuilding strategies that include, truth, justice, mercy and peace. Fundamental to the reconciliation process is the restoration and rebuilding of relationships (Galtung, 1996, 2001). This highlights the need for improved communication and better understanding between groups, which could lead to greater co-operation and co-existence at the individual and political level. Reconciliation requires a change in the emotional orientations of fear, anger and hatred to hope and a positive outlook of the future (Bar-Tal, 2000; Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal, 2006). The constructive conflict resolution and reconciliation approach involves the development of an interactive interdependent web of activities and relationships among elites, professionals, and the grassroots organizations. Grassroots non-governmental organizations may play a significant role in the process of reconciliation as facilitator and mediator of cross-community relations.

The international community works with community NGOs to develop a conceptual, analytical and systematic multi-track peacebuilding process (Jeong, 2005). Building a sustainable long-term coordinated and integrated peace process combines development with reconciliation, security, and political transition to achieve goals, empower the grassroots, heal from the traumatic past and restructure relationships (Byrne, 2001; Jeong, 2005). Local voluntary NGOs assist communities assume responsibility for change and in shaping their future (Senehi, 2008a). Community capacity building is connected to the development of interdependent relations with others. NGOs use their knowledge and expertise to work with grassroots communities to develop needed expertise by sharing and transferring knowledge (Goodhand, 2006). Capacity building assists people to empower themselves and their

communities in people-to-people interaction to build cooperation, repair relationships and structures in order to transform their environment and improve the quality of their lives by building sustainable peace (Lederach, 2005). According to Connie O'Brien (2005) community development: (1) promotes a people-centred, people-driven approach to development, (2) does not rely only on professional external intervention as a catalyst for developing action, (3) facilitates local leadership capable of encouraging participatory approaches, (4) enables people of various persuasions to work together to achieve fundamental human needs, and (5) incorporates conflict resolution strategies to facilitate development.

Community capacity building engages the local community in sustainable peacebuilding as confidence-building measures and contact to promote hope, justice, respect and equality emerge (Senehi, 2008b). Community capacity building also provides new knowledge and resources to build self-esteem and self-efficacy in multiple sectors of society simultaneously (Lederach, 2005). NGOs use their experience and expertise to facilitate interaction and collaboration to build bridges of understanding and cooperation (Byrne *et al.*, 2006). Capacity building empowers people to utilize human and physical resources and establish local networks to creatively transform society (Ryan, 2007). Webmakers weave relational webs integrating horizontal and vertical capacities across socio-economic and political spaces (Lederach, 2005). An inclusive peacebuilding approach energizes the grassroots to visualize and imagine peace as they believe in their own personal power, think critically about issues, and participate to build capacity in their communities to promote coexistence, a peaceful future and prevent the re-emergence of conflict (Boulding, 2000).

NGOs also work to empower groups to create shared space that promotes a cycle of healing and respect that nurtures reconnections and new relationships through sustained dialogue (Lederach, 1997). Acknowledging the past constructively affects the possibilities of forging a future culture of peace (Senehi, 2008a, 2008b). Constructive conflict resolution involves partnerships between NGOs, local communities, external funding agencies and governments to relate to a new vision of thinking and doing (Byrne *et al.*, 2006). Action thinking and the reform of institutional structures provides avenues to realistically transform conflict by changing negative attitudes and perceptions, socio-economic and political development, and the restoring of relationships in a process of shared responsibility (Byrne, 2001).

One of the best lessons on cross-community work through local civic organizations has emerged in Northern Ireland (Byrne, 2001). Many of the organizations, especially in Belfast, have focused specifically on the preventative mechanisms that include: (a) preventing/reducing anti-social behaviour among youth, (b) improving the socio-economic situation, (c)

education, training and personal development, (d) promoting inter-group contact through a variety of initiatives, including arts and cultural activities, sport, and mass media, and (e) inter-church work (Kosic, 2006). Many organizations who work to improve community relations among young people in Belfast base their projects primarily on the theory that friendly and cooperative contact with people and groups from the antagonist community will lead to tolerance and understanding (Gidron *et al.*, 2002; Morrissey *et al.*, 2001; O'Brien, 2005). A significant part of inter-community programs in Belfast concerns work on "sensitive issues". It includes themes which focus on the differences between communities and the problems arising from within them (for example, cultural diversity, politics, human rights, and coexistence). Some programs bring groups of young people from the two communities together to listen to each other about their personal experiences related to the conflict. These initiatives give young people the opportunity to begin to see the other side's point of view. They try to educate young people that different cultural and religious perspectives, and even political preferences can co-exist within a society, and that no group should regard it as their right to dominate or intimidate the other into adopting alternative beliefs and practices.

This study aims to explore civic organizations and projects which were designed in more recent years to assist community relations work with young people in Vukovar, with the objective of supporting reconciliation, breaking down enemy images, and reducing fear and distrust towards "the other side". We describe below the types of civic organizations, their projects and initiatives, as well as of the sustainability, strength, weakness, opportunities and barriers for peace education through community relations work in Vukovar, as well as making some comparisons to cross-community work in Belfast.

Methodology

In 2007, in-depth interviews were conducted with thirteen representatives of civic organizations in Vukovar, active in the field of volunteerism, cultural and sport activities. The interviewer stressed her interest in the personal experience of the interviewees and they were assured of the protection of their anonymity. The respondents were different from each other by virtue of gender, age, spatial milieu, and experience of the conflict. The interviews were loosely structured around a set of topics; the wording of the questions and their sequence followed the flow of the interview itself and not some pre-defined order. The interviews addressed themes such as: (1) opportunities and barriers for dialogue between the young people belonging to the Croatian and Serbian communities, (2) strategies used by civic organizations to promote peace education and reconciliation, and (3)

problems experienced by civic organizations in terms of funding, planning activities, and motivating young people to participate.

The face-to-face interviews lasted between 80 and 120 minutes, and typically took place in the individual's workplace. All interviews were taped in order to draw upon the participants' experiences, transcribed verbatim, and then subjected to discourse analysis. The analysis concentrates on discourse constructed around the aforementioned themes starting from a description of the activities undertaken in last five years. The analysis is followed by a description of strategies and methods used to promote dialogue among young people in Vukovar, and their perception of obstacles to community relations in that part of the world. Our analysis seeks to discern the perceptions of respondents in their own words in order to better understand how civic organizations impact upon the peace process and reconciliation.

Findings

Vukovar is a small city, and it was not expected that a large number of civic organizations would be found there. Most organizations were created in the last few years with the initiative of people active in NGOs in Western countries, who have worked to transfer their experiences, skills and knowledge to local communities and mainstream partners. Nowadays, most international organizations have left the Vukovar-Sirmium County led by the belief that mainstream organizations can now do the majority of the peacebuilding work. Moreover, international donor agencies have gradually left the Vukovar area. As a result, youth and volunteer organizations must now provide their own financial resources, competing for international and national funds to fund the activities.

The activities of non-governmental organizations in Vukovar are mostly structured around:

- (a) Promotion and protection of human rights, with an emphasis on the rights of persons belonging to ethnic minorities, and on the resolution of refugee/displaced people problems
- (b) Education for interethnic, inter-religious and inter-cultural tolerance as a base for forging a culture of peace and nonviolence
- (c) Development and strength of the preconditions for sustainable social-economic development and the reduction of unemployment
- (d) Improvement of people's quality of life, which also includes leisure activities
- (e) Healing from the psychological traumas that emerged as a consequence of conflict.

Most NGOs in Vukovar are led by young people. Their activities are planned and implemented through several short-term and long-term projects,

through which NGOs try to bring together people from different ethnic, religious, professional, age, gender, and interest groups.

Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

Human rights problems in Croatia have been noted in several local and international reports (Amnesty International USA, 2007; Center for Peace, Legal Advice and Psychosocial Assistance, 2004) with reference to some isolated violent incidents and problems with the local bureaucracy. For example, the Centre for Peace, Legal Advice and Psychosocial Assistance was established in 1996 with the support of the humanitarian organization OXFAM based in Oxford, Britain. The Centre is active in the promotion and protection of human rights of national/ethnic minorities. Basic activities of the program are oriented towards: providing legal assistance to people in need, in particular to returnees; monitoring the implementation of the return process and local integration; analyzing and reporting on the progress and/or obstacles; and providing recommendations to change of negative practices. The Centre also tries to increase public awareness about human rights, and human right violations, and to improve interethnic understanding. Activities implemented by the Centre include legal assistance, the organization and conducting of seminars, public discussions, informing and monitoring of the situation, and advocating for minority rights and cooperation. All of these activities are not addressed only to young people, but to a larger category of people, which may have hopefully an indirect positive effect on the quality of life of young people as well.

Education for Interethnic, Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Tolerance

A wide and varied spectrum of activities was undertaken by NGOs with the aim of restoring contact between young people belonging to both ethnic groups. These activities are aimed to teach them new knowledge and skills with regards to nonviolent communication and conflict resolution through seminars and creative engagement (for example, role-playing and theatre groups). A high percentage of young people in the region are characterized by limited communication skills, lack of knowledge of nonviolent techniques of conflict resolution, and how to communicate without passion and anger.

Most of the existing projects have tried to bring children and youth from different national backgrounds together, with the aim of supporting a new generation without ethnic division and to sharpen their sense of criticism. These objectives have been implemented through communication skills,

human rights, and environmental protection skills, workshops, and through some creative activities.

The project *Conflict Transformation Through Dialogue in Croatia* was created by the NGO *Vukovarski Institut za Mirovna Istraživanja i Obrazovanje* (VIMIO – the Vukovar Institute for Peace Research and Education) in 2002-2003 with the objective of improving knowledge about conflict transformation and communication skills among secondary school teachers (who are divided by ethnicity, and do not communicate between themselves even when they share the same school building), and among the parents of high school students. The project was conducted through three four-day seminars on issues of conflict resolution through partnership life skills (Dudley Weeks' method), and the development of an action plan for the community. Moreover, nine one-day follow-up workshops for the participants were organised, as well as a lecture "Partnership Among Citizens and Local Authorities". Furthermore, another project, *Vukovar Together for High School Students in Vukovar*, was implemented during the period 2003-2004. It was also aimed at the development of cooperation amongst secondary schools, and in providing an opportunity for students to work on personal and community development through the expression of creativity, cooperation and team work. Eighteen students were trained to edit and publish a youth newspaper for two years. Moreover, some workshops with students were organized on such diverse issues as contraception, addiction prevention, and leisure activities.

It is not always easy to convince schools to collaborate as they have a heavy work schedule. School principals also tend to be suspicious when they read the project proposal, especially if they do not personally know or trust the leader of the project. It is much easier if some of the teachers are open to collaborate and are willing to give a portion of their time toward the implementation of the project. Through these projects, children from different ethnic groups spend time together and with their parents, who would perhaps not otherwise have an opportunity to meet and be in touch with each other.

Some NGOs have residential programs especially during the summer time. The project "Run Without Frontiers" (named with symbolic reference to the river Danube) promoted by *Europski Dom Vukovar* (EDVU - The Europe House Vukovar), involves a group of ten young people from high schools in Vukovar and ten youths from a high school in Serbia who were brought together to an ecological farm in a Croatian village not far-away from Vukovar. They participated actively in the work of the farm, and in a series of seminars on socio-psychological themes such as the formation and reduction of stereotypes and prejudice, ethnic/national identity, and the nonviolent resolution of conflicts. Some children from primary schools also participated in a summer camp organized in Rakovica by the EDVU program, which also brought children together from the former Yugoslav republics; in 2006 seven children from Vukovar

spent time at the camps. The Director of the EDVU noted that, “if you take children out from this context – from Vukovar – then they are absolutely different. They do not care about divisions and borders; they do not need to think what their parents would say if they see them in the company of others”.

However, in comparison to Belfast, very few initiatives have been promoted on the discussion of “sensitive issues”, such as cultural and political differences, human rights, reconciliation, and forgiveness. The problem is that it is difficult to find the funds to carry out such programs, and to find experts able to focus on the development of such programs. An exception to this project “Dealing with the Past” was implemented by the Nansen Dialogue Centre through a radio program entitled “Examples of Noble Deeds During Wartime”. This radio program was broadcasted on a local station, Radio Dunav presenting some examples of good and heroic people who, during the war in the former Yugoslavia, helped their neighbors, friends, and unknown people of different ethnicities. Further, a conference “Goodness and Truth: Basis of Togetherness” was organized in November 2007 in collaboration with the Europe House Vukovar, the Union of Families of Imprisoned and Missing Croatian Defenders, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. The participants discussed examples of the humanity expressed between Croats and Serbs living in Vukovar during the war. Their constructive stories provide a basis for building dialogue and reconciliation in society and positive examples for teaching the younger generation.

Another program that needs to be mentioned concerns the series of forums, called “*Tribina*” organized by the Europe House Vukovar (EDVU). Experts from Croatia and other neighboring countries discussed themes of interest for a Vukovar audience. During the first couple of years, only ten to twenty people used to come but more recent forums reached an audience of more than 200 people. A large crowd attended a forum in 2005, when the presenter Mr. Zivorad Kovacevic, the President of European Action in Serbia delivered a speech on the theme “Vukovar, Please Forgive” or *Vukovare Oprostite*.

Development and Strength of the Preconditions for Sustainable Social-Economic Development and Reduction of Unemployment

Respondents perceived that unemployment and other economic factors contribute largely to the pathology in individuals and in the community. Several projects by different NGOs have focused on reducing unemployment, through education and prequalification, and in promoting entrepreneurship. These initiatives were designed to raise young people’s expectations and aspirations assisting them through education and professional training to increase their capacity and skills to cope with a life of social disadvantage. In the post-war period, Vukovar is an under-developed area with a high unemployment rate and with little promise of economic improvement over the

next few years. Almost all industry in the region was destroyed during the conflict, and has not since been rebuilt. Since 1991, technology has advanced and almost all of the old factories would need to be redesigned. Another problem is the transition from Communism to capitalism as new methods of work and management would need to be learned, such as self-initiative, critical thinking, and a positive work ethic. The NGOs organize different courses, starting with teaching young people foreign languages and basic or advanced computer skills as well as how to undertake entrepreneurial activities. They emphasize that in promoting peace and education, the first step is to restore the self-confidence of individuals in order for them to have confidence in others.

The PRONI Centre for Social Education (*Centar za Socijalno Podučavanje*) has worked in the Republic of Croatia since 1997 and gives special attention to youth. It was established by support from PRONI in Sweden, and supported financially by the Swedish International Developing Agency (SIDA). Besides many other projects on inter-community contact in 2007, PRONI started the project “*Ricochet*”, together with the Croatian Employment Service, the Chamber of Crafts and Trades, the local economic development agency, and the Technical College of Vinkovci. Ricochet aims at reducing unemployment, through education and prequalification, and at promoting entrepreneurship among 120 young women.

Improvement of People’s Quality of Life and Leisure Activities

Similarly to Belfast, young people in Vukovar can spend their free time watching TV programs or hanging out in café bars. Civic organizations in Vukovar are aware of the need to help young people to improve their quality of life through involvement, for example, in cultural and sport activities, but very few initiatives have been promoted because of the difficulty in securing funds to organize these programs. For example, PRONI is devoted towards the implementation of a two-year university program for youth workers, and the development of a network of Youth Clubs throughout Croatia. Today, Youth Clubs in Croatia have attracted more than 1300 regular members, and are active in promoting various cultural initiatives such as concerts, dance, informal education and debates, and sport. Many concerts and music festivals have attracted young people across borders. Project leaders are convinced that the constant exchange of new people, especially young people, from other cities and countries can positively influence the youth in the Vukovar area. Visitors bring new ideas and have a positive impact in the local community.

Related to this ideal, most NGOs consider that the perspective of future integration with the European Union (EU) can have an important psychosocial

impact on the respective societies and serve as an incentive for peace education and democratic reforms. A high percentage of these inter-cultural projects emphasized the need to develop an awareness of European identity, and an understanding and acceptance of multiculturalism. In relation to this objective, several thematic seminars and awareness raising campaigns were organized by local NGOs.

Healing From the Psychological Traumas Emerged As A Consequence of Conflict

Several respondents pointed out that community revitalization and development starts with the healing of psychological problems (trauma), which emerged as a consequence of the conflict, to the reestablishment of each individual's self-confidence. Psychological traumatization is at very high levels throughout the region of Baranja and East Slavonia where the city of Vukovar is located. Many people experienced frequent shelling for five years, separation from loved ones, destruction of homes and other buildings, poverty, homelessness, loss and bereavement. However, very few organizations and experts in Vukovar have dedicated their attention to counselling children and families through individual and group work, and through workshops for parents and teachers. NGOs need to assist people in their searching for psychological healing and peace within their inner-being and consequently with others. The problem is that it is difficult to find the funds to carry out such programs, and there are not enough professionals to provide psychological support. Moreover, many people will not ask for professional assistance as psychotherapy is culturally stigmatised in the former Yugoslavia.

In sum, all NGOs in Vukovar promote initiatives oriented toward the improvement of communication among youth through joint activities and education directed toward the appreciation of differences, multiculturalism, tolerance, and the nonviolent resolution of conflicts. In carrying out the aforementioned activities, youth-oriented NGOs face numerous obstacles to their work.

Obstacles to Community Relations Work By NGOs in Vukovar

During the first post-violence years, the representatives of local government as well as ordinary people have perceived NGOs with suspicion, as they received money from funding agencies from abroad. There is little openness from local governmental institutions towards cooperation with

NGOs. In a few cases, local government wanted to place obstacles in the path of NGO projects for reasons which were unclear to the NGOs' leaders. However, in more recent years a few representatives of local governmental bodies have started to appreciate the work done by NGOs and have even started to support their efforts.

As far as financial sustainability is concerned, the future of NGOs in Vukovar remains questionable. Most project funding spans only a few months, and NGO leaders are forced to spend considerable time on proposal writing. Respondents perceived that the increase in short-term funding over the past ten years has ushered in a spirit of competition into youth work practice. They underline that the funding application processes are often cumbersome and time consuming. Their capacities are overloaded and it often happens that they have several activities taking place at the same time and it is complicated to coordinate these efforts.

Croatia's law on foreigners and volunteers also presents a problem. The law, in effect since the beginning of 2004, makes it practically impossible to have foreigners present for more than 90 days within a six month period. Although the law makes an exception for students registered at the university, NGOs have even had problems obtaining visas for people who wanted to attend a course offered by NGOs in Vukovar.

The banking systems also remain a barrier with high bank charges and difficult regulations making NGO work difficult. For example, it is not possible to withdraw more than 5000 Euros per month from a bank in Croatia without the permission of the National Bank. Neither are NGOs with foreign status able to obtain credit cards for their organization.

A limited number of cultural activities are offered to the youth of Vukovar, who would not generally organize events of their own. Many young people are subject to apathy and fail to recognize the opportunities to have an active role in societal changes. Youth free time is disorganized and there is also a lack of education among young people regarding the management and production of culture. Even more crucially, children and young people do not have the time to participate in extracurricular activities. They spend an average of seven hours in school almost every day and they feel overburdened by the amount of homework they have to do. In Croatian schools, the orientation toward learning facts still prevails, and optional programs and extracurricular activities through which children could develop their potential and express their creativity are neglected (The National Program of Action for Youth, 2003). There seems to be little awareness among young people for the need for ongoing life-long education and training once they complete the formal education process.

Due to poor socio-economic standards in the region, most young people have limited possibilities for educational, cultural and tourist mobility outside

of the area. A high level of youth mobility is a prerequisite for being open to communicate with other societies and thereby to learn about their cultures, and about tolerance of cultural differences. In secondary schools, recreational excursions, graduation trips and other travels are non-compulsory extracurricular activities. Only a few schools define overseas travel as part of the student's educational program, and this is reflected in a much lower level of tourist activity among young people in Croatia in comparison with other European countries.

Conclusions

The enormous effort which individuals and organizations put into these projects should be saluted and recognized. People working in NGOs and other organizations who are active in promoting inter-group dialogue are those citizens who have committed themselves to work for the revitalization of civil society. The NGOs working in Vukovar in Eastern Slavonia are now mainly mainstream organizations as the international community has slowly withdrawn from this region over the past seven years. Despite being deprived of substantial support, all NGOs in Vukovar persist in pursuing their goals for the well-being of the society.

The aim and objectives of the NGO projects and activities considered here are to improve relations between ethnic groups in Vukovar through the encouragement of greater contact and, more widely, through the development of mutual understanding and respect for different cultural traditions. With regard to peace education and reconciliation approaches, a wide and varied spectrum of activities was undertaken with the aim of restoring the self-confidence of individuals in order for them to have confidence in others with the aim of bringing people together. A number of community projects have been undertaken in the last number of years to promote inter-group dialogue among youth. These initiatives involve people from both ethnic groups in the hope that their contact can reduce negative stereotypes and promote dialogue and reconciliation.

There are several factors mitigating against the achievement of such goals (some of which are elaborated further in the article by Parker in this volume). First, the respondents in this research perceived that unemployment and other economic factors play a major part in exacerbating individual and community conflict. Thus, many projects have focused on helping socially disadvantaged people such as the unemployed. Such initiatives are designed to raise young people's expectations, hope, and to assist them through education and training to increase their coping skills.

Then there are the specific limitations that these projects share with most cooperative contact programs. For example, we do not know if contact

per se produces positive attitudes toward others, or if individuals who already engage in contact have had a certain level of positive attitudes toward relations with the other group. It is possible that those individuals who become involved in community relations projects are those who would already uphold the values of a peaceful and equitable society. Moreover, as work from Northern Ireland has indicated, even if participants do come to view one or a small number of individuals from the other group more positively, they will not necessarily generalize their positive attitudes and perceptions beyond the specific situation in which the positive contact took place to the group as a whole (Hewstone and Brown, 1986). Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the quality of contact, and the conditions under which it takes place, are important determinants of successful outcomes. Contact, to be a useful tool in promoting tolerance and coexistence must be more than the casual meetings that occur in much of everyday life. Close friendly relations are more likely to reduce prejudice. Contact is also more effective when it has broader institutional support, even if that is just a supportive social atmosphere. In Vukovar, some positive changes have occurred at the crucial institutional level, such as a growing propensity towards integrating high schools. However, it is absolutely evident that much more community-based peacebuilding work is in urgent need of support and development if future generations are to escape the devastating legacy of violence and division.

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THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA: THE PROMISE AND REALITY OF RECONCILIATION IN CROATIA

Sara Parker

The international community is increasingly interested in promoting post-conflict reconciliation in a variety of forms, with trials and truth commissions featured most prominently. The contemporary academic discussion over transitional justice (and the practice of transitional justice itself) is largely focused on whether and how these types of large-scale national transitional justice mechanisms contribute to reconciliation. This article examines the promise and reality of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to contribute to national reconciliation. Ultimately, the ability of state-wide policies to contribute to reconciliation rests on the active participation of local level actors. This requires political backing at the state and local level beyond that of just the international community. More attention needs to be paid to domestic cultural factors in the initial decision to implement state-wide transitional justice procedures, and bottom-up mechanisms must be built into any large scale approach to reconciliation.

Introduction

When you work on producing conflict you work on a general level ... The recipe for violence is always the same ... If you work on reconciliation, you must work on a personal level. (NGO worker in Vukovar, Croatia)

At the end of conflict, how can transitional justice and reconciliation be achieved? Agreement barely exists over the definitions of these terms, much less agreement on how they can be accomplished. Yet, interest in, and attention to, these topics continue to grow. Kaminski *et al.* (2006) define transitional justice as the formal and informal procedures implemented by a group or institution around the time of transition out of an oppressive or violent social order for rendering justice to perpetrators, collaborators, and victims. Lederach (1997, p. 27) defines reconciliation as “the point of encounter where concerns about both the past and the future can meet”; a point where truth, justice, mercy and peace convene. Other authors have aptly described reconciliation as an “opening”, a time or a space where a willingness to work towards this point exists (Doxtader, 2001).

The two transitional justice mechanisms that feature most prominently in the discussion are trials, whether domestic or international, and truth commissions. Both of these mechanisms are implemented at the state level. Other state-wide transitional justice options include instituting or upholding amnesties, providing reparations, or utilizing purges (also known as lustration). As an additional number of states started to implement truth commissions in the 1990s, a “truth vs. justice” debate emerged in which the positive and negative attributes of truth commissions began to be examined against the positive and negative attributes of trials (see Rotberg and Thompson, 2000; Minow, 1998; Méndez, 1997). According to Leebaw (2003, p. 27), “morally, prosecutions were viewed as unambiguously superior to truth commissions, and to other forms of transitional justice”. In response, advocates of truth commissions sought to build a case for their superiority in comparison with trials. By the mid 1990s, “human rights advocates and scholars increasingly began to argue that many of the dilemmas once associated with transitional justice were based on false dichotomies and limited thinking about the range of forms transitional justice might take” (Leebaw, 2008, p. 102). Both trials and truth commissions are currently promoted as uniquely important elements of transitional justice and there is an emerging scholarship on how trials and truth commissions can co-exist (Schabas, 2003; Kelsall, 2005; O’Flaherty, 2004; Hannum, 2006; Lanegran, 2005).

Regardless of whether trials, truth commissions, or a hybrid of both are used, the contemporary discussion over transitional justice (and the practice of transitional justice itself) largely focuses on whether and how large scale national transitional justice mechanisms contribute to reconciliation. Furthermore, both of these mechanisms have become increasingly institutionalized in international organizations that help states to implement them. This has led to a standardization of how trials and truth commissions operate, making culturally dependant adaptations difficult.

While the academic literature recognizes the relevance of civil society and the importance of culturally-sensitive programs in the quest for transitional justice and reconciliation, this has not resulted in adequate incorporation of these programs into national level mechanisms. In this paper, I argue that the initial promise that the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) would be able to promote societal reconciliation in Croatia was largely undermined by the fact that there was no discussion or plan on how to incorporate bottom-up approaches into national-scale policy decisions. More attention must be paid to domestic cultural factors in the initial decision to implement state-wide transitional justice procedures, whether a truth commission, a trial, or something else. In addition, regardless of what mechanism(s) are chosen (and choice is likely to be highly

restrained), there must be a plan for local participation. Ultimately the ability of state-wide policies to contribute to reconciliation rests on the active participation of local level actors. This requires political backing at the state and local level beyond that of just the international community.

This article proceeds by first examining the decision to implement the International Tribunal and Croatia's record of cooperation with the Tribunal. A lack of cooperation on the part of the Croatian government is not surprising given the lack of attention that was paid to the cultural appropriateness and practicality of utilizing this mechanism in the first place. In the second section, I look at the initial belief that the ICTY would be able to contribute to reconciliation processes. In the third section I show that this has not been the case. Whether the consequence of lack of will, lack of foresight, or lack of adequate international pressure and support, the failure of the Croatian government to integrate locally based efforts into the national reconciliation plan only made the challenge of reconciliation via the Tribunal more difficult. In the last section I highlight the benefits that can be gained by incorporating grassroots activism into any national plan to promote effective reconciliation. Throughout, I offer anecdotal evidence based on field research conducted in eastern Croatia in the summer of 2005 to substantiate my suggestions.¹ This case illustrates the need to widen the discussion on transitional justice to include a dialogue on how state level mechanisms can incorporate bottom-up reconciliation practices.

Establishment of the ICTY

Punishment dominates our contemporary conception of transitional justice (Teitel, 2000). The trial, with its emphasis on retribution, prosecution and justice, is perhaps the best recognized mechanism for dealing with past abuse. The suggested benefits of prosecution include: enhancing the prospects for solidifying the rule of law, educating citizens about the wrongs of the past, identifying victims for compensation, punishing those responsible, deterring future violations, and healing societal wounds (Landsman, 1996). "It has been argued that society cannot forgive what it cannot punish. If that argument is correct, the first real step to restoring social harmony comes with prosecution" (Landsman, 1996, p. 84). Along with the prosecution of individuals in state-run trials, international tribunals have gained popularity with the establishment of the ICTY and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), International Criminal Court, Special Courts in Sierra Leone and Cambodia, and the Iraq Tribunal (see Meron, 2006 for a discussion on the evolution of International Tribunals).

The ICTY was created through Security Council Resolution 827 in 1993 outside the purview of the Croatian government. It can be viewed as the result of a trend (one that began with the Nuremberg trials) towards holding national leaders responsible for abuses committed while they were in power. “Not only did the [Nuremberg] tribunal reject the fiction that leaders acted on behalf of their societies and therefore should be immune from punishment, but in prosecuting the crime of aggression, it discarded the assumption that the decision to go to war was a state prerogative beyond normative scrutiny” (Thomas, 2005, p. 30). Aldana-Pindell (2004, p. 67) calls the culmination of this trend the “duty to prosecute norm”, which “requires states to conduct an effective criminal investigation and prosecution with the aim of punishing those responsible for right to life and humane treatment violations”. As Roht-Arriaza and Gibson (1998, p. 843) point out, “anti-impunity measures are no longer simply a question of national choice”.

Prior to the creation of the ICTY and ICTR, Nuremberg (and to a lesser extent the Tokyo trial), was the pivotal example of justice at work. “The Nuremberg trials were to be a history lesson, then, as well as a symbolic punishment of all the German people—a moral lesson cloaked in all the ceremonial trappings of due legal process” (Buruma, 2002, p. 145). The ICTY was seen as an improvement over Nuremberg (which is often described as “victors’ justice”) because it was implemented prior to the resolution of conflict and because it required Croatia to try its own citizens, i.e. to practice “victims’ justice” (Scheffer, 1996).

The decision to create the ICTY was not a response to the specific demands of Croatia’s situation, but a foreign-imposed decision that appeared an international normative demand for justice. The ICTY gained a reputation of having come into existence to assuage Western powers’ guilt for their own failure to prevent the atrocities: “At the time of its establishment, rather than being universally hailed as a moral triumph, the ICTY was derided by some observers as an act of hypocrisy” (Akhavan, 1998, p. 744). Talk of a truth commission circulated sporadically, but never gained mass backing in Croatia. The idea may have originally been thwarted by the concern that revelations could undermine the historic International Tribunal. Today, there continue to be efforts to promote such commissions throughout the region.²

The Croatian government did support the creation of the court, and has pressured the court to prosecute Serbs. However, the government has also fought for immunity for Croatians accused of war crimes (Peskin and Boduszyński, 2003). Although Croatia’s cooperation with the ICTY has steadily improved since its inception, this cooperation should not be seen as indicative that either the government or Croatian citizens support the trials. Peskin and Boduszyński (2003, p. 1117) argue that, “no issue has polarized the post-authoritarian Croatian political scene as much as the issue of

cooperation". The premature death of President Franjo Tudjman (and the failure of the Court to indict him prior to his death) prevented Croatia from outright denouncing the Court. Consecutive governments since Tudjman's death have found themselves caught politically between support (or at least cooperation) and opposition to the ICTY. On the one hand, the Tribunal offers the potential to vindicate Croatia's steadfast position as having been victimized by Serb aggression. Cooperation also bodes well for Croatia's EU accession process (Cruvellier and Valiñas, 2006; Peskin and Boduszyński, 2003). On the other hand, cooperation requires turning over Croats at The Hague's request – in effect an admission that Croats had actually committed war crimes and that alleged crimes were not merely defensive acts.

Since full statehood status was granted in 1998, the Croatian cooperation record has varied. In some cases, wanted criminals turned themselves in and in other cases threats from the World Bank were required before Croatia agreed to comply (Sharp, 1997).³ An overall positive evaluation on compliance in various international appraisals has been consistently overshadowed by a perceived lack of diligence on the part of the Croatian government in tracking down a few high level Croatian Army officials, and due to the strong public reactions opposing the extradition of these individuals. Peskin and Boduszyński (2003, p. 1121) write: "Its assistance to tribunal investigators and prosecutors notwithstanding, the Croatian government has appeared increasingly hesitant to comply with its international legal obligations when it comes to the biggest tests of cooperation – the arrest of indicted war suspects and their transfer to The Hague". Only when threatened with EU refusal to initiate accession talks did Croatian authorities begin to adopt "a more pragmatic, if ambivalent, approach" (Cruvellier and Valiñas, 2006, p. 7).

Overall, "Croatian authorities have sent inconsistent messages to the public regarding war crimes, and the European Commission has described Croatia's attitude towards the ICTY as 'lukewarm'" (Zoglin, 2005, p. 58). The public has responded negatively to the Tribunal based on the perception that it is anti-Croat, despite the fact that the most of the cases for crimes committed in Croatian territory have been against Serbs (Cruvellier and Valiñas, 2006). Although it was originally assumed that the ICTY would contribute to societal reconciliation, there was little thought given as to what this process would actually entail.

The Promise of Reconciliation

Despite its lukewarm reception, advocates of the ICTY nonetheless initially believed that the justice doled out by the Tribunal could offer a path to reconciliation. This expectation was based on the assumption that justice and peace necessarily complement one another. As Scheffer (1996, p. 34), a former senior advisor and counsel to the U.S. permanent advisor to the U.N. put it: “We are finally learning that the pursuit of peace can coexist with the search for justice and that the pursuit of justice is often a prerequisite for lasting peace”. It was believed that the use of legal mechanisms to bring perpetrators to justice was not just as a putative means of addressing human transgressions, but a symbol of justice, and therefore, a burden-lifting experience for witnesses and a necessary component for peace (Rudolph, 2001).

There is an assumed link between criminal procedures, whether on an international or a national scale, and healing on an individual level (Fletcher and Weinstein, 2002). Snyder and Vinjamuri (2003) make three claims about the effectiveness of trials in this regard. First, they argue, trials send a signal to potential perpetrators of atrocities that they will be held individually accountable. In other words, trials have deterrent value. Secondly, trials are seen as having the effect of strengthening the rule of law and establishing justice. Lastly, trials emphasize the guilt of individuals, thereby defusing the potential for future violence. International tribunals (as opposed to domestic ones) are particularly presented as facilitators of reconciliation due to their rarity, international scale, and higher standards of neutrality. In addition to the tangible products international tribunals produce – perpetrators behind bars, court transcripts and witness testimony, and proof that humanitarian norms are relevant – there is a belief that, “individual accountability for massive crimes is an essential part of a preventative strategy and, thus, a realistic foundation for lasting peace” (Akhayam, 2001, p. 10).

The association between peace, justice, and reconciliation was automatically assumed in the case of the ICTY. The United Nations ICTY website describes the trials as paving “the way for the reconciliation process within the war-torn societies of the former Yugoslavia”. Speaking on the same subject, former U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright stated that, “in the end, it is very difficult to have peace and reconciliation without justice” (Rudolph, 2001, p. 656). This understanding “was subsequently echoed by leading members of the ICTY itself and became a central component of its ideology” (Akhavan, 1998, p. 756). For instance, following the passing of Security Council Resolution 1503, which implemented a completion strategy for the ICTY, Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte stated in an Address to the

U.N. Security Council on October 9, 2003: “By completing these investigations, ICTY will have proven that it worked impartially towards achieving justice, peace and reconciliation in the former Yugoslavia”.

The Reality of Reconciliation

Unfortunately, at this point in time, the promise of the ICTY to promote reconciliation has been largely discredited. As Akhavan (1998, p. 770) notes: “Of course, even if the ICTY can establish a factual record of what happened, it cannot contribute to national reconciliation if this record is not recognized and internalized by the peoples of the former Yugoslavia”.

An outreach office was created in 1999 through voluntary country donations. According to the ICTY website, it was meant “to bridge the divide separating the organisation in The Hague from the communities it serves in the states and territories that have emerged from former Yugoslavia”. This was, perhaps, the most direct attempt to increase the Tribunal’s ability to reach the Croatian public. Given that the trials were being held in The Hague and were very much removed from the daily lives of the average Croatian, this was an important step. Yet, the office is located at the outskirts of Zagreb behind barbed wire and guarded walls and is staffed by only one outreach officer. As the picture below shows, a cryptic graffiti of the word “Vukovar”, referring to the eastern town held under siege by Serb forces and a symbol of the atrocities committed in Croatia, marks a wall protecting the facility (see Figure 1, below).



Information about the trials in general has been poorly disseminated: To the extent that peoples in the former Yugoslavia are denied access to the proceedings of the ICTY, the truth exposed through the judicial process may have no appreciable impact on interethnic reconciliation. Despite the importance attached to this truth-telling function, the proceedings of the ICTY remain somewhat inaccessible to peoples of the former Yugoslavia (Akhavan, 1998, p. 793).

The outreach office never made a valid effort to reach the Croatian people and explain what they were doing. In contrast to Bosnia and Serbia, ICTY hearings have not been broadcast in full on Croatian TV. “This has made it easier for politicians to manipulate popular perceptions of the process” (Cruvellier and Valiñas, 2006). According to Dr. Charles Tauber (2009), Head of Mission for Southeastern Europe of The Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace: “There was – and is – massive opposition by the politicians, not only to the ICTY but to any form of possible reconciliation. Nationalism still serves virtually all of the politicians of whatever ethnicity and thus reconciliation is counterproductive for them”.

The reaction in 2007 to the ICTY verdict that convicted Mile Mrkšić and Veselin Šljivančanin, former senior officers in the Yugoslav People’s Army, exemplified this tension. Mrkšić was sentenced to 20 years, and Šljivančanin to five years for their role in the murder and torture of over 200 Croat prisoners held in a Vukovar hospital. The third man accused was acquitted by the Tribunal Chamber. The rulings set off a widespread reaction among the public, who took to the streets to protest. The government

supported their reaction; the following day, Prime Minister Sanadaer condemned the verdict as a defeat for the Court, and sent a letter to the U.N. General Secretary expressing his “disappointment and consternation” with the “shameful ruling” (OSCE Spot Report, 2007).

Coinciding with the strong reaction the court has at times elicited among the Croatian public (one that has been encouraged by politicians and the media), there is also widespread disinterest in the Tribunal. For example, in July 2005, the head of the city council in Osijek (the largest city in eastern Croatia) came under scrutiny after allegations of war crimes surfaced. A poll conducted by the newspaper *Glas Slavonje* on July 31, 2005 found that 81 percent of respondents (all of whom were self-subscribers to the poll) believed the issue should not be pursued, reinforcing the impression that “many, if not most people, in Osijek and the rest of Croatia regarded Glavaš as a hero, not as a criminal”. The same summer, the Ovčara trial began, yet coverage was far from front-page news.⁴ Because most of the news in Croatia since 1991 has revolved around war topics, said the founder of a local Serb radio station, “people are sick of it” (interview with author, 27 July 2005). An assistant at the ICTY outreach center expressed concern that all interest in the trial would cease to exist once Croatia definitively secured EU accession (interview with author, 15 July 2005). Perhaps more realistically, many simply do not acknowledge the relevance of the ICTY to their own lives.

Stover (2004) looked at evidence to evaluate whether the ICTY was able to effectively connect with the public through those who had actually testified at the Tribunal. He found that courtrooms are, by nature, neither safe nor secure environments for recounting dramatic events. His study of 87 ICTY witnesses found that those who expected to receive appreciation from the lawyers were let down, cathartic feelings often faded upon their return to shattered communities, and witnesses experienced feelings of “helplessness, abandonment, and anger” when light sentences were handed down. For many witnesses, testifying “required an act of great courage”, yet the Tribunal statute does not grant victims or witnesses specific rights, and information about the protective measures offered were not appropriately provided (Stover, 2004). Witness protection is a matter of concern in Croatian war trials, as fear and intimidation remains high (Cruvellier and Valiñas, 2006). Witnesses who testify face vilification in their own communities. Stover (2004, p. 119) concluded: “If potential witnesses come to regard their treatment as demeaning, unfair, too remote, or little concerned with their rights and interests, this neglect may hinder the future cooperation of the very people we are trying to serve”. According to Tauber (2009), the ICTY has been so politicized by both sides that any cooperation is seen as quite risky and unsafe.

Fletcher and Weinstein (2002) argue that there is a communal engagement with mass violence left unaddressed by criminal trials. In their field research, they conducted interviews with judges and prosecutors in Bosnia-Herzegovina and found that all three ethnic groups in Bosnia (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs) saw themselves as victims (Fletcher and Weinstein, 2000). This is because international criminal trials can have the effect of stigmatizing ethnic groups (Fletcher and Weinstein, 2004). A study done by Meernik (2005) attempted to find empirical evidence to affirm or deny the impact of criminal arrests and judgments of war criminals on ethnic violence. His study was also carried out in Bosnia, where he found little evidence to suggest that the ICTY had any positive impact on societal peace, and in some cases it appeared that ICTY actions inflamed ethnic tensions rather than contributed to cooperation or reconciliation. The controversy over General Ante Gotovina suggests that these authors' findings also hold true in Croatia.⁵

Gotovina became a symbol of Croatia's refusal to admit complicity in war crimes. In August 2000, a survey reported that over 78 percent of Croatian citizens "think that Croatia must not extradite its citizens if the Hague Tribunal requests it" and 60 percent polled believed the ICTY was "unfair" (Akhavan, 2001, p. 22). According to the article "No Gotovina, No Cash" in *Transitions Online* on March 21, 2005, polls put Croatian opposition to Gotovina's extradition prior to his capture as high as 70 percent. After Gotovina was finally arrested in December 2005, the national championship football team pledged to donate proceeds from their last match of the 2006 season to the Foundation for the Truth about the Homeland War, which raises money in support of Croats facing trial in The Hague; Gotovina was the presumed beneficiary (Hawton, 2006). Gotovina's trial, along with two other Croatian army Generals (Ivan Cermak and Mladen Markac) opened in March 2008. At that time, Merdijana Sadovic of the Institute for War and Peace Reporting suggested that the prevailing opinion in Croatia was that the Generals had been wrongly accused. In short, nationalist groups have been able to raise the cost of political cooperation by the Croatian government by "effectively designing a rhetorical strategy which equates the Tribunal's indictments against Croatia's war heroes with attacks on the dignity and legitimacy of the so-called Homeland war" (Peskin and Boduszyński, 2003, p. 1117).

Another attempt to make the ICTY more relevant for Croats came in the form of a law passed in October 2003 that included provisions related to the transfer of proceedings from the ICTY to Croatia. It gave Croatia the ability to hear war crimes cases⁶ and outlined various mechanisms for moving them there.⁷ Trainings were instituted in May and June of 2004 to inform the Croatian judiciary of comparative aspects of Croatian and ICTY law (OSCE

Background Report). According to a report of the International Center for Transitional Justice, “monitoring organizations still consider the number and type of war crimes cases brought before Croatian courts to be unsatisfactory (cited in Cruvellier and Valiñas, 2006, p. 19). Zoglin (2005) highlights excessive trial delays, inefficiencies, unqualified staff, and a lack of political will and public support to try war criminals as major obstacles to Croatia’s ability to try their own cases. This fits well with the observation that “legalist tactics for strengthening human rights norms can backfire when institutional and social preconditions for the rule of law are lacking. In an institutional desert, legalism is likely to be either counterproductive or simply irrelevant” (Snyder and Vinjamuri, 2003, p. 12).

That the ICTY has not been an effective means for societal reconciliation in Croatia is not an unexpected finding. We should continue to view war crimes trials as a valuable component of the transitional justice process. However, their utility in terms of reconciliation can only be evaluated in the context of receptivity in the communities they hope to reach. In Croatia, where strong existing nationalist sentiment was given a voice through trial indictments and verdicts, this notion was not adequately taken into account. Doing so would have required the Croatian government to have a plan to supplement activities in The Hague with local measures and the support of local actors also working on reconciliation. “As the ICTY has learned, trials do not exist in a vacuum and must be accompanied by public discussion and education” (Zoglin, 2005, p. 74). When the government is either unable or unwilling to initiate this discussion or enact programs to facilitate engagement with the trials in a way that might further societal reconciliation, that responsibility is left to local organizations.⁸

The Importance of Incorporating Local Level Participation

Generally speaking, scholars of international relations have begun to pay increasing attention to the role that non-state actors play in the international system (see, for example, Finnemore, 1996; Hall and Biersteker, 2002; Risse-Kappen, 1995; Risse *et al.*, 1999;). Non-governmental organizations are believed to occupy a primary role in world politics and domestic politics. They are frequently the main suppliers of services that governments are either unwilling or incapable of providing. Many provide social programs, advocate for underprivileged groups, and give attention to less “popular” issues on the national or international agenda. In this role, they form a link between the government, and the population.

The term used to describe the existence of strong, permanent linkages is “civil society”. According to Belloni (2001, p. 168), civil society can be

understood as, “a sphere where the power of the state is limited by the capacity of individuals to organize themselves collectively”. Authors have clapped onto the idea that civil society enables states to jumpstart desirable processes such as democratic participation, respect for human rights, and enhancement of other global social norms such as environmental protection. The relevance (and importance) of grassroots activism in reconciliation processes has not been ignored. Over the last decade there has been a growing recognition and confidence in the potential for civil society to play an important role in deeply divided societies (Belloni, 2001).

Locally-based programs, or grassroots approaches are often seen as promising for the promotion of reconciliation because they operate at the community level and are therefore more attuned to the unique demands of that community. Halpern and Weinstein (2004, p. 567) write: “To be effective, reconciliation must arguably begin at the level of the individual—neighbor to neighbor, then house to house, and finally, community to community”. Many authors are also in agreement that it is important to pay adequate attention to the unique cultural practices of the society in question when working towards reconciliation. For example, writing about the case of Sierra Leone, Shaw (2005) suggests that the goals of the national truth and reconciliation commission actually conflicted with cultural expectations of justice and reconciliation, perhaps even undermining its effectiveness. In another study on the effectiveness of the “truth-telling” objective in Sierra Leone’s truth and reconciliation commission, the author argues that truth was not told for a variety of reasons, one of which was due to the fact that “public truth-telling – in the absence of strong ritual inducement – lacks deep roots in the local cultures of Sierra Leone” (Kelsall, 2005, p. 363).

Similarly, Theidon’s (2006, p. 456) field research in Peru leads her to conclude that “reconciliation is forged and lived locally, and state policies can either facilitate or hinder these processes”. In Rwanda, the Gacaca courts are seen as holding greater promise for reconciliation than the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda because they are based on local models of restorative justice (Drumbl, 2000). International organizations like the U.N. and the International Center for Transitional Justice acknowledge that any transitional justice mechanism must be adapted in response to unique circumstances. However, even these adaptations tend to be somewhat prescribed because they are based on prior knowledge and lessons learned.

Many authors have elaborated eloquent theories of how both bottom-up and top-down approaches are needed if reconciliation is to be achieved. For example, Lederach (1997) proposes that we think of leadership in conflict populations as a pyramid. At the top, leadership is focused on negotiations and cease-fires, and is led by single mediators; middle-range leadership includes those working in respected education, religious, ethnic and

humanitarian sectors on problem-solving and conflict resolution; grassroots leaders are locals, who work on grassroots training, prejudice reduction and psychosocial work. Afzali and Colleton (2003) classify different paradigms of coexistence projects: those that focus on dispute resolution and conflict management, social services, income-generating projects, and reconciliation projects. They point out that there are numerous ways to promote coexistence, each targeting different audiences. They, too, distinguish between top- and bottom-level approaches: “As top-down efforts resolve the fundamental political and legal concerns, bottom-up efforts can provide vital reinforcement and actualization of coexistence on a more immediate and more personal level” (Afzali and Colleton, 2003, p. 15). Johan Galtung (2001, p. 19) outlines twelve unique approaches to reconciliation, including the juridical/punishment and historical/truth commission approach, but points out that, “taken singly, none of the approaches is capable of handling the complexity of the ‘after violence situation.’”

My intention is not to reiterate their work, but to suggest that their insight – the importance of including multiple levels of reconciliation approaches – is lost when national scale policies are implemented and carried out. The following questions need to be addressed prior to implementation of large-scale national policies: How will state level mechanisms work in tandem with local activists and culturally accepted reconciliation mechanisms? How will the government support initiatives that integrate national transitional justice policies with local community outreach and support local organizations? To what degree will the international community support these efforts?

Effective implementation of national policies relies on grassroots efforts; even the best-planned national programs need local partners. Local NGOs are best able to deal with the challenges posed by the uniqueness of different communities. In Croatia, NGOs “have helped create a public space for a public debate on the human rights abuses in the country” (Cruvellier and Valiñas, 2006, p. 27). For instance, The Center for Peace, Osijek, a non-profit organization, has provided legal advice to over 36,000 clients since opening in 1993. Because they operate at the societal level, their lawyers have a level of knowledge about specific populations that even the best-designed state run programs, or even a large international NGO would not be able to achieve. Their work has provided the voice of advice in the region on legal matters, including on complex amnesty laws that kept many Serbs from returning to the area. They also helped write the legislation for the creation of a government funded legal aid service.

As a group, and as Kosic and Byrne (this volume) note, NGOs in Croatia face substantial problems (particularly in the Slavonia region), including lack of governmental support, lack of know-how (in terms of

running an effective and efficient NGO), lack of funds, and public skepticism. Problems of segregation, intense competition among organizations, and corruption also exist. Disagreements between Serb and Croat associations also pose a serious problem (Cruvellier and Valiñas, 2006). Of these four the most critical issue is lack of support from the Croatian government. “State funding for NGO development declined sharply, from approximately E3 million in 2001 to E2.3 million in 2002 and remained at E2.3 million in 2003” (Stabilization and Association Report, 2003). The NGO Youth Peace Group Danube had the opportunity to participate in a government-sponsored dialogue that resulted in an agreement on the part of the government to implement a youth policy called the National Action Plan for Young People in 2003, comprised of 110 measures. As of summer 2005, only one of these measures had been financed, though others were supposedly in the process of implementation (interview with author, 1 July 2005).

Many of the NGO workers I spoke with commented on the lack of governmental recognition of the important services they provide as well as an overall lack of rhetorical support. An employee from the NGO Europe House Vukovar said that the government does not seem to be conscious of the important role that NGOs play (interview with author, 24 June 2005). A project coordinator at another NGO had a more cynical view: “They [the government] produced the war, they produced the trauma, and now they manipulate the trauma” (interview with author, 28 July 2005). Those organizations that attempt to work towards reconciliation face the very difficult task of trying to prove their worth. An NGO worker from the Nansen Dialogue Center illustrated this point when he explained that those organizations that fund the re-building of houses get to point to a structure when they are finished and say, “I built that”. The resulting product for those working on reconciliation is often difficult to recognize or quantify.

A U.N. report titled Lessons Learned (1998, p. 39) regarding the United Nations’ Transitional Authority for Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES) mission states: “The civil society [sic] in countries in conflict are an important mechanism for national reconciliation and the United Nations needs to establish early dialogue and cooperation with them and where possible strengthen them”. In spite of this, the experience of many NGOs is that while U.N. Agencies claim to engage in dialogue with the NGOs, they do not actually do so. Rather, they take on an attitude of superiority which is most often not based on good grassroots contact (Tauber, 2009).

Dusanka Ilić, President of The Bench We Share Association offers an example of how NGOs can directly facilitate reconciliation. She has personally led and/or organized hundreds of groups from local communities where individuals from diverse backgrounds come together again and talk. While this is an ideal situation for promoting reconciliation, it will never be

feasible on a national scale unless there is broad base support from both the government and the international community. Tauber (2009) recalls that at one point in 1997, the Croatian government made an agreement with UNTAES to do this but after a few meetings the scheme quickly died.

The international community could help to overcome some of these problems by encouraging capacity building measures and education programs (Zoglin, 2005). Fletcher and Weinstein's (2004, p. 43) research in Bosnia and Herzegovina found that international trials need to "support the development of parallel teaching and rehabilitative structures addressed to domestic audiences. In this manner, international trials might contribute to achieving justice in its broadest sense. However, this potential has remained largely untapped". When trials are transferred without appropriate training mechanisms and community education programs in place, as in Croatia, there is a potential to actually undercut the contributions to reconciliation that a tribunal could make. In Croatia, there was never a holistic plan for reconciliation, no step-by-step plan that sought to address issues of justice, promote dialogue and trauma healing. UNTAES did not begin working on reconciliation until the last three months of their mission. Tauber states: "I have been told by a number of local and international officials that reconciliation and trauma healing are 'peripheral'. The same is true of such ideas as restorative justice, which I believe would be highly appropriate in these contexts. The point is that these concepts quite simply are off the radar".

Conclusion

Reconciliation is not a modern phenomenon, but one that can be found across all times and places (Borneman, 2003). What are unique are attempts at atonement, not at the individual or societal level but on a national scale; such efforts are largely applauded internationally. Reconciliation, through the use of both trials and truth commissions, is seen as attentive to needs of individuals. However, without an explicit plan to engage individuals and their communities, these national-scale policies will not result in "trickle-down" reconciliation.

According to Tauber, as well as other professionals in the field, the collective recovery from the war in Croatia has been virtually non-existent. The real harm caused by Croatia's failure to address this trauma through effective reconciliation mechanisms is the transmission of trauma and prejudices to the next generation, and the potential for further violence. Scholars who write on trauma believe that, if left unaddressed, the ramifications of individual and collective trauma can have severe effects on individuals and societies, as well as be passed down from generation to

generation (for more on trauma see Lewis-Herman, 1992; Abu-Nimer, 2001; Chayes and Minow, 2003; Stover and Weinstein, 2004; Volkan, 1997). Currently, high levels of ethnic tension remain in Croatia, and the public is still “ill-prepared, ten years after the end of the war, to full face its legacy” (Cruvellier and Valiñas, 2006, p. 36).

Academic interest in reconciliation is an encouraging step towards understanding how to eliminate violent conflict. In addition, the promotion and use of mechanisms such as international tribunals and truth commissions which attempt to achieve reconciliation offer promise that this interest is, with increasing frequency, accompanied by action. Practically speaking, however, not enough attention has been given to thinking about how state-wide policies such as these can best achieve reconciliation. Acknowledging the importance of bottom-up approaches and actively soliciting the participation of local organizations has enormous potential to improve the success of national-scale reconciliation projects.

The ICTY is set to close in 2010. The possibility for the court to contribute to reconciliation over the course of its seventeen years in existence was squandered due to a lack of foresight and lack of initiative. National level mechanisms must be considered with local level politics in mind. There is currently an international expectation of transitional justice in countries emerging from violent pasts; as this norm continues to strengthen, it is important that one-size-fits-all mechanisms are not advocated or initiated simply because they are “supposed to”. Furthermore, national level mechanisms must be integrated with grassroots efforts working towards the same goals. Grassroots efforts must be appropriately funded and supported by both the national government and the international community. The academic dialogue on transitional justice revolves around whether or not truth commissions and/or trials and tribunals can achieve, or have achieved, reconciliation. We now need to widen the discourse in order to pay more specific attention to how individual and community level participation – the levels on which reconciliation actually needs to occur – can be incorporated into these mechanisms.

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Endnotes

¹ Field research was conducted under the guidance of the Dutch-based non-profit organization, The Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace between June 25 and August 12, 2005.

² For example, the United States Institute for Peace Balkans Initiative has a program entitled "Bosnian Truth and Reconciliation" that is working towards submitting draft legislation to the parliament. It is also important to point out that Serbia and Montenegro did establish a truth commission in 2001, but it went largely unnoticed and quickly fell apart. The likelihood that Croatia will implement a truth commission is very low; a truth commission would demand that Croats admit a degree of complicity in committing atrocities, a position that goes against the Croatian attitude toward the war as put forward by Tudman and the leadership of the HDZ and promulgated by the media that it was almost a holy war.

³ General Rahim Ademi, for example in 2001, and former Army Generals Cermak and Markac in 2004. In 2004, the government turned over Army General Mirko Norac, and facilitated the transfer of seven additional voluntary surrenders to The Hague.

⁴ Ovčara is the location of a mass gravesite about ten kilometers west of the city of Vukovar, where 200 civilians were purportedly taken from the Vukovar Hospital and shot in October of 1991 by JNA soldiers.

⁵ Gotovina is accused of responsibility for the murder of 150 Serb civilians and the expulsion of 150,000 more in 1995.

⁶ Trying perpetrators for War Crimes is the only criminal recourse the Croatian government has due to a 1996 law negotiated between the Croatian Department of Justice and the Republika Sprska Krajina (RSK) which granted amnesty to all who had been sentenced (in absentia) for armed rebellion.

⁷ Law on the Implementation of the Statute of the International Criminal Court and Criminal Prosecution for Acts against War and Humanitarian International Law.

⁸ It is important to point out that the international community should also be held responsible to a certain extent. UNTAES had a special ability to begin this process

during its two-year presence in Eastern Croatia. Similarly, foreign governments that were heavily involved in the region had enough political clout to demand that the Croatian government do the same and political entities such as the European Union have the unprecedented ability to dictate that Croatia implement such measures even today. As important as this is, it is not the central focus of this paper.

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