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KOSOVO

Work in Progress: Closing the Cycle of Violence

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1 Introduction

This paper is written from the perspective of a foreigner who has been involved in peace projects concerning Kosovo since 1991, initially as a fellow nonviolent activist, later as one of the organisers of a team promoting Serbian-Albanian dialogue, and finally as a peace researcher and consultant on "peace-building". The paper begins with a brief outline of important features of four phases of the recent past: the period of autonomy, 1971-1989;¹ the period of direct rule from Belgrade, 1989-99; the war, 1998-1999; and the post-war. It then looks at the impact of this past on the current behaviour and attitudes of Kosovo Albanians.² After this scene setting, the bulk of the paper concentrates on efforts to close "the cycle of violence", in particular the demands of six inter-related approaches to this.

Given my background as outlined above, it is perhaps not surprising that one of my criticisms of the international post-war activities in Kosovo is that they have not taken sufficient account of the recent history of Kosovo. It is symptomatic of this failure that governments, leaders of the international operation and international media generally refer to the "conflict" in Kosovo as if it were an event that took place between 24 March and 11 June 1999. I deplore this usage for four main reasons:

1. The substitution of "conflict" for a more precise term lends itself to a more general lack of rigour, and specifically to failing to acknowledge the weight of previous history.
2. Wars should be called "wars" even if those who are waging them do not declare them as such.
3. Kosovo was at war in 1998, when more than 2,000 people were killed and at one time 20% of the population were displaced.³
4. There was conflict in Kosovo throughout the twentieth century, frequently bloody. This history was invariably marked by the ethnic domination of either the Serbs or the Albanians.⁴

The root of the conflict in the twentieth century can be put most simply as the unwilling incorporation of Albanians into Yugoslavia, "the land of south Slavs", and their subsequent oppression there. Since the end of the war in Kosovo, conflicts from this same root have flared into armed combat just across the borders from Kosovo, in Preshevo valley in south Serbia and in Macedonia. In Kosovo itself, certain groups of Serbs and Albanians remain primed for war

Looking back on the two years since the war, one Kosovo Albanian commentator has remarked:

Bearing in mind what happened in the past 20 years and even further back, it should surprise no one that no progress has been achieved in the relations between these two nations [Serbs and Kosovo Albanians, in the past two years]. There is no war, but the disposition to war has not been dispersed, nor has the possibility of new war confrontations [been] erased from their minds ...

Both Albanians and Serbs are most dedicated to the fulfilment of their totally opposed national aspirations. This activity gives the main tones to their mutual relations and greatly narrows the space for ... pacifying the situation.⁵

I have visited Kosovo three times since the war - in November 1999, in May 2000, and in July 2001. On each visit, I notice various shifts of opinion. What does not change is that Kosovo Albanians remain absolutely adamant that they will never again be treated as a minority within Serbia, while few Kosovo Serbs are willing to accept the status of being a minority in Kosovo (rather than a majority in Serbia).

These demands are so central to both communities that the "main tones" in relations continue to be characterised by animosity. This animosity was not caused by the war, nor even by the preceding period of direct rule from Belgrade. However, inevitably, it has been heightened by these experiences.

At the same time, there are at least "undertones" of movement towards tolerance and coexistence. Indeed, official representatives of Kosovo Albanians are again "on message" that their national aspirations are best pursued by making every effort to include Kosovo Serbs and other minorities in the "new Kosovo", echoing the refrain from the era of nonviolent struggle that "in order to gain independence, we have to show ourselves worthy of it". If this theme has gained renewed strength in view of the revulsion against anti-Serb and anti-Roma violence in post-war Kosovo, perhaps now it is framed more negatively. Once upon a time, people believed that "independence" might come as a "reward" for eschewing violence; now it is more likely to be said that ethnic violence could cost Kosovo Albanians whatever opportunity exists for achieving independence.

If the question of status remains as divisive as ever, within the interim framework established by the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) there have been various accommodations between Albanians and Serbs. The framework can do nothing to prevent each community pursuing its own exclusive interests, but at least it provides a meeting place to address those issues that can be tackled together. Full reconciliation - in the sense of establishing friendly relationships between Kosovo's Serb and Albanian communities - is not on the agenda. However, what might be achievable in time is coexistence with guarantees of human rights, including the rights to security and participation.

The discussion in this paper centres on "dealing with the past", and doing so primarily *within* the Kosovo Albanian population. The term "cycle of violence" refers to a self-perpetuating cycle fuelled by feelings of grievance and desire for vengeance. After the experience of war and occupation, a community has perhaps six main ways of closing this cycle:

- **Justice** - punishing and purging the "guilty". However, to be "restorative", this justice does not only involve public acknowledgement of the wrong done but also has to offer the "innocent" opportunity to "clear their name" and, what is more difficult, those who express remorse the opportunity for "rehabilitation".
- **Emotional healing** - supporting people in coming to terms with the horrors they have experienced and with their current "distress". The goal is to achieve some "closure" so that the wounds of the past do not fester and poison future relations.
- **Forgiving by the wronged of the wrongdoer** - letting go of the hurt and so establishing the basis for a new relationship.
- **Drawing a line under the past** - being willing to cooperate with the Other in addressing the problems of today and looking forward to a future based on different values.
- **Compensation and reparation** - having one's loss acknowledged, receiving the means to start afresh, to restore a sense of well-being through social and economic development.
- **Truth** - talking and listening in an effort to make sense of what has happened from different points of view. This ultimately implies dialogue, the mutual search for truth from various angles.

These are all inter-related, sometimes going hand in hand, sometimes following causally. The war in Kosovo left many threats to peaceful coexistence to be addressed and fundamental issues of the inter-ethnic conflict still to be resolved - above all the intractable and inflammable question of Kosovo's ultimate status. In the face of power-political uncertainties, what can be achieved through the approaches discussed here is limited: at best they can be conducive to coexistence and create conditions in which conflict can be approached constructively.

2 A current overview

With the November 2001 elections, the majority population of Kosovo has regained most of the powers of self-government it lost in 1989, this time not in the frame of a federal Yugoslavia but as a UN protectorate. Both the international administration and most Kosovo Albanian leaders have expressed satisfaction at the "peaceful conduct" of the elections especially because, urged to vote by the government of Serbia, around half of the Serbs registered inside and outside Kosovo participated. Such judgements, however, are relative: there was intimidation, including Albanians stoning Serbs leaving an election rally, and the situation of Serbs remains precarious. The depleted Serbian population – currently numbering around 100,000, about half its pre-war level – feels under siege. Most Serbs are grouped together in enclaves or live under international military protection. This has contributed to a reduction in the incidence of violence, but the threat is ever-present. Within a week of the elections a Serb woman was killed and her husband seriously injured, apparently at random, in a drive-by shooting. It remains unsafe to speak Serbian in the streets of Prishtina or most other towns in Kosovo. Serbs, if they travel within Kosovo, require special transport and international escorts. When UN agencies and other international bodies help Serbian refugees return to Kosovo, the returnees are greeted with hostile demonstrations and threats.

The history of the twentieth century provides both Serbs and Albanians with reasons to suspect that the other community wants to drive them out of Kosovo and is interested less in peaceful coexistence than in ethnic domination. Events in 1999 fulfilled the worst fears of both communities. First, the Serbian ethnic cleansing drove half the Kosovo Albanian population from their homes. Thousands were killed; and rape was widespread. Second, even before the arrival of the international forces and the return of most Kosovo Albanians, most Serbs fled from Kosovo, fearing the revenge to come. Had they not fled, there would doubtless have been many more than the 150 deaths of Kosovo Serbs recorded by the international administration in its first six months.⁶ Those Serbs who initially did not flee soon found themselves exposed not just to the rage of the Albanians but to organised armed groups who - whether for political or criminal motives - forced them out of their homes and in general tried to expunge the Serbian presence from Kosovo.

Although all Kosovo Albanian leaders publicly denounced these actions and called for peaceful coexistence, their statements tended to take a routine and ritual form. Many people felt that those leaders connected with the Kosova Liberation Army (UÇK) were not doing as much as they could to stop the violence, but it is also clear that a struggle was taking place within the UÇK itself and within the broader Albanian community between those oriented towards revenge and expulsion and those wanting to maintain human rights standards and to support ethnic coexistence.⁷

Meanwhile, Serbs in northern Mitrovica "resisted" with their own paramilitary and vigilante groups expelling Albanians. If they are doomed to lose Kosovo as a whole, at least they want certain areas to be controlled by Serbs, and preferably a partition where northern Kosovo with its industry and mines would be ceded to Serbia.

Post-war Kosovo became saturated by international agencies - at one point 350 were registered. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) heads an unprecedented international operation, coordinating the activities of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union (EU), the World Bank, the UN's own agencies and virtually all the major humanitarian organisations. UNMIK has the highest per capita funding of any international humanitarian mission. At the same time, the UN and OSCE's lack of preparation for this mission and the failure of governments to meet their promises - for instance in seconding police or judges to Kosovo - severely curtailed its effectiveness, especially in the vital early months.⁸

3 Layers of the past

3a The war

The war in Kosovo can be dated from the Serbian security offensive that began in February 1998 and became world news with the Drenica massacres. Before that, the Kosova Liberation Army (UÇK) had but a few hundred members. The war reached its height a year later, when the OSCE withdrew its ceasefire verification mission and NATO announced its bombing campaign. Between March and June 1999, some 850,000 Albanians fled Kosovo, while thousands more were "internally displaced". The NATO bombings did comparatively little damage to property in Kosovo - rather the weapon most responsible for the destruction of tens of thousands of houses was the humble cigarette lighter. More than 60,000 houses were made uninhabitable. Most Kosovo Albanians now have the experience of expulsion from their home, hiding in fear of their lives, hunger, being robbed, some form of degradation, the death, or disappearance or imprisonment of family members or loved ones. In addition, the land was strewn with unexploded ordnance - the anti-personnel and anti-tank mines were mainly Serbian (although some were also laid by UÇK), and the cluster bombs were dropped by US and British planes.⁹

After the war in Croatia, I noted that the Serbian objective had not been to *prevent* as much as to *punish* secession.¹⁰ The military strategy was psychological, aimed more at hurting and damaging than at winning or protecting interests. In Bosnia, a further dimension was added with concentration camps and the collective rapes. The Other had to be humiliated, rendered worthless in their own sight. So it was in Kosovo. Every person violated or stripped of their dignity was seen as sending a message to the rest of that community. Rape of women in 1999 was widespread and systematic, a strategic instrument in ethnic cleansing. The number of rapes recorded runs into hundreds, and the real total is likely to be thousands.¹¹

After 24 March Kosovo Albanians knew that they were in mortal peril because of their ethnicity. Many discovered, too, that Serbian neighbours with whom they had no personal conflict were now a danger to them, part of a campaign to drive them out of Kosovo and to loot their homes. As the Serbian forces departed Kosovo their last gestures were of vandalism: they left wells poisoned by rotting carcasses (including some human corpses), water supply systems to be reconnected and food supplies to be re-established, and they removed vital components from industrial plant.

Horrific as the situation was in Kosovo, it can and has been argued that internationally Kosovo assumed a disproportionate priority - both with the NATO campaign and the subsequent international mission. The 1990s saw worse massacres and more destructive military campaigns than those in Kosovo. There were also regimes more dictatorial and ruthless than that of Milo_evi_. Furthermore, every day huge numbers of people die from "structural violence" - exploitation and neglect. These are all valid points in discussing international policy and priorities. However, in terms of understanding the situation inside Kosovo itself and the experience of Kosovo Albanians, there should be no minimising the terror that reigned after 24 March 1999. For its victims, this was the culmination of everything that had gone before - since the Serbian reconquest of Kosovo in 1912, a history that for Kosovo Albanians is largely made up of atrocities and attempts to expel them from their homeland.¹² Above all, it was the culmination of the Milo_evi_ era, of the oppression administered during the period of direct rule from Belgrade.

3b The uncertain fate of the missing and imprisoned

The triumphal entry into Kosovo of NATO forces in June 1999 might have seemed to close another bloody episode of this history. However, there were fresh causes for anger. Those Albanians who had trusted Serb neighbours to look after their property often reported that these neighbours had helped themselves to anything from house furnishings to tractors. For those with loved ones in prison in Serbia or who had disappeared, the war had not ended. At that time, perhaps 6,000 Kosovars (including Serbs and Roma) were missing unaccounted for, and more than 2,000 Kosovo Albanians were held in Serbian prisons, most of them detained without trial.¹³

As long as Milo_evi_ remained in power, the prisoners' issue continued to inflame Albanian opinion. Each new trial of Albanian "hostages" in Serbia brought heavy sentences handed out casually. Fears for how the prisoners were faring were confirmed periodically by reports of ill treatment.¹⁴ The prisoners included some individuals prominent in their localities and two who were symbolic for all Kosovo Albanians: the doctor and poet Flora Brovina, a founder of the League of Albanian Women (and later a presidential candidate in Kosovo's first general elections), and the student leader, Albin Kurti, who is seen as representing the cream of Kosovo Albanian youth.¹⁵

After the fall of Milo_evi_, the new Belgrade government began the re-trial and release of the majority of Albanian prisoners. Flora Brovina was among the first. The majority of prisoners were released during 2001, and in September 2001 there were reports that the final 200, including Kurti, would be transferred to a detention centre under UNMIK auspices inside Kosovo for their cases to be reviewed.

Another factor that kept open the wounds of war was the protracted process of examining collective graves and identifying the remains. Inside Kosovo, international forensic scientists investigated collective graves until November 2000, exhuming nearly 4,000 corpses or part-corpses.¹⁶ More than a quarter of these human remains have still to be identified, while there were still perhaps 3,000 Kosovo Albanians missing unaccounted for.¹⁷ Upon leaving, the international investigators handed local institutions a list of more than 60 graves awaiting investigation.

Rumours continued to circulate that there were other mass graves inside Kosovo.¹⁸ Then in summer 2001 the Serbian authorities ordered the excavation of mass graves in Serbia proper, estimating that they contained the cadavers of 800 Kosovo Albanians. At the height of the ethnic cleansing, on orders from Belgrade, Serbian forces loaded corpses into container lorries which took them to several dumps around Serbia and Vojvodina. By mid-September 2001 the remains of 420 had been exhumed.¹⁹

3c Before the war

From 1989 until 1998, following the annulment of Kosovo's autonomy, it was common to describe the situation in Kosovo as "neither peace nor war", to which the commentator Shkëlzen Maliqi would sometimes add "but closer to war than peace". Kosovo Albanians saw this period as an occupation. Its proclaimed aim was nothing less than to reclaim the territory as Serbian. This brought discriminatory legislation and the mass dismissal of Kosovo Albanian employees.²⁰ Worse was to come, but the violence of 1998-99 was in some senses prefigured by the police raids on villages during the previous 10 years. Until the emergence of the UÇK, these normally stopped short of killing, but the beatings often had a psychological thrust - for instance, humiliating a father in front of his family - and police conduct aimed to offend Albanian cultural norms.²¹ The regular police carrying them out were usually accompanied by reservists, that is "ordinary" Kosovo Serb men.

What had been a Kosovo Albanian cultural renaissance in the 1970s and 1980s was laid to waste, while throughout the territory Serbian symbols proliferated - from road signs and place names to statues and buildings, especially newly constructed churches - each one claiming Kosovo for Serbia and communicating to Albanians "this is not your place". The attack on Albanian-language education was central. Seen by the regime as the nest of nationalism, the education system was vital to the maintenance of Albanian life in Kosovo.

The heritage of this past for the conflict today is not limited to the experience of the years of repression and the scars that has left nor the loss felt by those deprived of educational and other opportunities in that period. There are also outstanding material issues at stake - above all, people demanding their jobs back or the return to "its rightful owners" of industrial plant appropriated by friends of the regime.

A remarkable aspect of this time was how the community solidarity of Kosovo Albanians withstood the Serbian pressure. They organised their own parallel education system, their own taxation system and their own network of health clinics. They took pride in their self-organisation, in their nonviolence, and even managed to address "shameful" elements of their own society such as the blood feud and the position of women. If the strategy of nonviolence in general lost its dynamism after the first few years, there were small groups - especially of women and youth - who refused to be blocked by the "occupation", who persisted in looking to the future, organising themselves to challenge their own society and improve life even under these conditions.²² Nevertheless, there were many who predicted that the stress of this period would end explosively.

3d Experience of co-existence

Few Serb colleagues protested at the sacking of Albanians in Kosovo after 1989. Part of the reason for this was the prudence practised by people living under Communism: why take risks in ineffectual gestures of solidarity? The other reason, however, was the polarisation between the Serb and Albanian communities in Kosovo - and indeed in Yugoslavia as a whole. Unlike Bosnia, Kosovo has no "golden era" of inter-ethnic coexistence to look back upon.

If the entire history of Kosovo is contested, the period between the visits of Tito in 1967 and of Slobodan Milo_evi_ in 1987 is particularly contentious. Tito's visit heralded an era awakening the rising expectations of Kosovo Albanians, with remarks such as: "One cannot talk about equal rights when Serbs are given preference in the factories ... and Albanians are rejected although they have the same or better qualifications."²³

Twenty years later Milošević's oft-broadcast statement to Serbs rioting against predominantly Albanian police, "Nobody should dare beat you", identified him with the perceived grievances of Kosovo Serbs and marked his conversion from a Titoite apparatchik into the champion of Serbian nationalism.

In this period the taste of self-determination heightened the Kosovo Albanian aspiration that Kosovo should become a full republic of Yugoslavia.²⁴ At the same time, Kosovo Serbs claimed that Albanians were abusing their new share of power in Kosovo, driving out Serbs and conspiring to unify an ethnically pure Kosovo with Albania. The ruling League of Communists of Yugoslavia, instead of addressing problems that undoubtedly existed, tried to keep the lid on the situation by repressing dissidents from both sides. This, however, merely succeeded in creating a pressure cooker. As the 1980s wore on, Serb nationalist rhetoric became increasingly wild and racist.

In particular, after 1981, when federal troops brutally attacked Kosovo Albanian demonstrations demanding a republic, the divergence in the ethnicised versions of reality in Kosovo became extreme.²⁵ Each side maintained that only one mutually exclusive conclusion was possible: that Kosovo Albanians needed to be completely independent of Serbia; that Kosovo Serbs needed the protection of their fellow-Serbs.

4 Justice after war

"Now it should only be Albanians here," said Vlora Halili, an 11-year-old girl with a hard edge to her voice, "because [the Serbs] wanted it to be only Serbs and they lost." Her mother, Buki, disagreed: "For me it's possible for Serbs and Albanians to live together," she says. Her daughter would have none of it. "It's their turn to leave their homes," she says.²⁶

The post-war attitude that it was now the Albanians' turn to be "master" in Kosovo, where they form 90% of the population, was common in the second half of 1999. Indeed, when the Kosovo Protection Corps was formed, its Albanian acronym - the TMK - was soon rendered in English as "Tomorrow's Masters of Kosova". Walking down the main street of Prishtina at that time, a feeling of liberation was in the air²⁷ - but a liberation only for Albanians. Few were as explicit as the girl above. A more typical phrase was that "the Serbs have to adjust to the new realities". If there was to be a process of conciliation, it would be on Kosovo Albanian terms.

Those working in war crimes investigations offer a different approach, an alternative to "victors' justice", which they base on recognition of human rights and rigour about standards of evidence. The first essential step is identifying the wrong done. Those responsible for inflicting criminal violence should then be called to account and at least temporarily deprived of the means to repeat their crime. Another part of the process, however, should be to challenge any blanket accusations of collective guilt and to offer rehabilitation for those capable of being rehabilitated. By dealing justly with the culprits and the victims of violence, this approach to justice aims to interrupt the cycle of violence, of winner and loser, and to respond to the claims of past victims without creating new victims.

4a Indiscriminate violence

After nine years of "occupation" and fifteen months of war, Kosovo Albanian refugees returned and saw that their erstwhile oppressors had fled or were fleeing. The next month brought a rampage of violence - expulsion from homes, torching of buildings, beatings, abductions and torture.

Those Serbs who wanted to stay could be divided into those with a clear conscience who were willing to give coexistence a chance, and those who were ready to group together and fight a rearguard action. However, the Albanian violence rarely discriminated between them. With a vacuum in international policing, soon even those Serbs who wanted coexistence had been put to flight or were living in enclaves or under international military protection.

At the end of UNMIK's first month, when the Kosovo Albanian reaction against Serbs and other minority groups was at its indiscriminating height, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated that "reconciliation [in Kosovo] will not begin until those suspected of committing the most serious crimes, especially war crimes, are brought to justice."²⁸ Annan did not spell it out, but implied that until the most serious criminals are tried, then the whole Serbian nation would be under suspicion.

In the event, there have been serious delays in bringing criminals to court. There has also been a lack of other measures designed to encourage Albanians to distinguish between Serbs who might be criminally responsible and those who are not. Indeed, there has been negligible public discussion of what such measures might be.

Initially there were three main sets of reasons for delay:

- i) lack of capacity of the International Criminal Tribunal on Former-Yugoslavia (ICTY) in the Hague. Recognising that it did not have the resources to pursue all those who carried out war crimes, the ICTY decided to concentrate on those who gave the orders - above all on the architects of the whole criminal policy. So far it has publicly indicted Slobodan Milo_evi_ and four high-ranking members of his regime.
- ii) most war crimes suspects were no longer in Kosovo but in Serbia where the Milo_evi_ regime remained in power for a further 16 months after the war.
- iii) the state of the judicial system in Kosovo.²⁹ In the face of rising Albanian frustration, in April 2000 UNMIK announced that it would create a special Kosovo War and Ethnic Crimes Court to speed up the process, only to scrap the plan five months later in the interests of addressing the long term needs of rebuilding the system.³⁰

Shocking as was the violence of Kosovo Albanians against any Serb who tried to stay in their own home, it was not surprising in view of the popular anger, the absence of a serious police force initially, and the general failure of UNMIK to gain the initiative in this situation. Analysing the purges in Western Europe after the Second World War, Andrew Rigby has noted the urgency with which various governments attempted to control the actions of vigilantes in pursuit of self-help justice.³¹ Within months of their liberation, tens of thousands of suspected collaborators in former occupied countries had been arrested. The post-war Danish, Dutch, Belgian and Norwegian governments largely succeeded in channelling the demands of their citizens for "justice".³² In France, on the other hand, where the rate of prosecution was much lower, armed groups "summarily executed" some 4,500 alleged "collaborators".³³

In contrast to these post-war situations, it was almost a year after the war before the first Serb was convicted of a war crime in Kosovo.³⁴ By spring 2001, only approximately 40 Serbs had been arrested in Kosovo for serious crimes committed during the war, and most of them had escaped from pre-trial detention.³⁵

Perhaps UNMIK has taken Rambouillet as its guide. Rambouillet envisaged an amnesty for politically motivated crimes committed in the past, except for serious violations of international humanitarian law. To be eligible for public office, it would suffice that somebody had forsworn violence and had not been charged with war crimes.³⁶ However, there has been no formal statement that this is the policy. Moreover, Rambouillet was negotiated in very different circumstances from those obtaining after the war. If Kosovo Albanian negotiators were willing to agree to Rambouillet in a framework designed to avoid full-scale war, their attitudes were quite different after the ethnic cleansing and defeat of the Belgrade regime, with the common perception of widespread Serbian participation in war crimes.

To the emotional heat generated by the continued imprisonment of Kosovo Albanians in Serbia and the large numbers of missing and disappeared was added the fuel of events in Mitrovica. From the Albanian point of view, not only were Serbs still actively participating in violence against them, but they were trying to sabotage Kosovo and engineer at least a partition. In general, argued Albanians, the Serb enclaves and monasteries were harbouring war criminals; the CDHRF in Prishtina went so far as to accuse the then leader of the Serbs in Mitrovica of participation in the wartime slaughter of 26 Albanians - the very war crime for which several of the escaped detainees were being prosecuted.³⁷

4b Beyond juridical processes

Instead of "interrupting the cycle of violence", UNMIK's failure to expedite war crimes trials inside Kosovo exacerbated the atmosphere of intolerance towards the Serb minority. An accused Serb is not presumed innocent until proven guilty: legalistic rules of evidence matter less than what people hear in their own community and what they understand of the other community. In the community "prejudicial" material - such as videos documenting the horrors committed by Serbs or newspaper reports that omit words such as "alleged" or "suspect" - is circulating freely and indeed has been referred to in some of the trials that have taken place. This is one of several factors making it difficult to organise impartial trials in Kosovo.³⁸

However, even if there were more war crimes trials taking place in Kosovo, one would not expect that formal juridical processes alone could shift Albanian attitudes towards the collective guilt of Serbs.

Other measures are needed that demonstrate that the distinction is not only between guilt and innocence, but between shades of protagonism and complicity, and that the response should not only be "punishment" but "rehabilitation". This is well illustrated in the case of Petar Topoljski.

At the end of April 2000, the newspaper *Dita* denounced Petar Topoljski as a war criminal. Topoljski was a Serb who had fled Kosovo but returned to work as a translator for UNMIK. A week after *Dita's* accusation, Topoljski disappeared, and the next week his stab-marked corpse was found. UNMIK head, Bernard Kouchner reacted by banning *Dita* for eight days, accusing it of incitement to violence and hatespeak. Although Kosovo Albanian media did not support *Dita's* decision to publish, they opposed the ban, criticising UNMIK not only for failing to prosecute war crimes suspects but for being so careless as to give them jobs.

Topoljski was never accused of killing, raping or beating anybody, nor of being a leader. Rather, he and his father, like many other Prishtina Serbs, are said to have joined a paramilitary band that in March-June 1999 was involved in evictions and looting. If this is true, an impartial judicial process might well have treated him more as an accessory than a protagonist and, in mitigation, he might have pointed to the social pressures upon him to join up, something that many Kosovo Albanians can understand.³⁹ Instead, without a trial, he was simply killed.

In some senses Topoljski was killed because he *could* be killed. His murder was a message to other Serbs who had joined paramilitary bands that they were not wanted in Kosovo and to Serbs contemplating return to Kosovo that they should not rely on military protection. It was not an isolated horror but a warning of what can happen in other workplaces or with other returnees.

The episode laid bare UNMIK's lack of strategy or even principled guidelines as an employer, let alone as the body seeking to prepare for Serbs to return to Kosovo:

* UNMIK admitted that it failed to screen employees, pleading "lack of resources". It should at least have promptly responded to *Dita's* accusation by suspending the employee pending investigation. Such a firm statement that "we are handling this" is the normal practice in many countries if a public employee is accused of wrongdoing.

* In the interests of transparency and public credibility, UNMIK should either have handed Topoljski over to public investigators (as demanded by the CDHRF) or organised its own panel of investigation for this and similar cases, preferably inviting respected local figures to take part.⁴⁰

* Had Topoljski been investigated and found not guilty, then UNMIK should have championed him and his right to live in Kosovo, backing any effort for him to clear his name, and it would fall to Kosovo Albanians in the investigation to join in this.

* If investigation confirmed that Topoljski was indeed a member of a paramilitary group, then a decision would have been needed on his level of culpability. Either he should have faced a war crimes trial, or if he was but a low-level "follower" merely obeying orders, then there could have been an attempt to reach an agreement about what would be an appropriate expression of regret, what "penance" he should serve or what "reparation" he might offer.

Worldwide, complex UN operations currently lack standard procedures and are slowed down, especially in the vital early stages, by having to improvise.⁴¹ Hence there is no existing model of appropriate processes for dealing with the numerous "low-level" suspects who might seek employment with the international administration or international help in "returning". UNMIK could have set up to commission to devise some guidelines or structures that might later serve for subsequent UN operations. These would include:

- i) the types of hearing appropriate, from being handed over to local courts to an internal screening for employment;
- ii) the level of sanctions corresponding to the degree of culpability, for instance being fined, having property confiscated, being barred for a period from certain types of employment or deprived of certain citizen's rights, offering a particular "community service" as a penance;
- iii) mechanisms for absolving individuals from the stigma of collective guilt, for establishing their innocence or offering means of rehabilitation such as some practical expression of remorse or performing some penance.

The UNMIK Temporary Media Commission was soon to introduce "the right of reply" for people maligned in the press. When *Dita* named 15 more Serbs as war criminals, one of them wrote a reply that eventually the Media Commission prevailed on *Dita* to publish. He expressed surprise at having been accused, claiming that he had never been in uniform and had helped Albanians escape during the ethnic cleansing. Many Albanians responded sceptically: "they're all claiming now that they helped us". Justified or not, this scepticism indicates that, while the right to reply is a vital step in democratising the press, it is not enough: for somebody to "clear their name" there has to be endorsement from a credible source.

Even by deciding to try clear his name – the only one of the 15 Serbs named who thought this worthwhile – this person was acknowledging the scale of the wrong done to Albanians and demonstrating his own will for co-existence. In order to encourage other Serbs to take this attitude, UNMIK could set up a standing body to which those wishing to "clear their name" could appeal. I would not underestimate the difficulty in devising locally acceptable systems and securing the participation of people who would lend them credibility.

However, improvising when an issue comes up, waiting for an Albanian to spring to the defence of a wrongly accused Serb,⁴² or muddling along without public discussion do not constitute an alternative.

4c "Clean hands"

i) Glama Quarry: US KFOR's attempt to "reintegrate" the publicly owned Glama Quarry, near Gjilan, eastern Kosovo, illustrates some of the inter-communal difficulties that exist. In late 1999, US KFOR made permission to import dynamite conditional on the quarry employing Serbs. Therefore the Albanian quarry managers agreed to interview Serbian former quarry-workers. In the end, despite the high unemployment rate and KFOR's promise of military protection, only 27 Serbs came to be interviewed - a quarter of what the US KFOR had hoped for. Four of these then declared they would not work for Albanians, while the Albanian managers decided that only six of the other 23 applicants were acceptable. One Albanian is quoted as saying, "if they have clean hands, they can come back and work here", before adding, but "there is not one Serb in 1,000 who has clean hands. There is not one Serb in 100,000 who has clean hands." Meanwhile a Serb applicant is quoted as saying yes, he wanted to work but only if the 35 other Serb former employees from his village were re-hired too. "If just some Serbs go to work and other Serbs don't, there will be resentment."⁴³

US KFOR persevered, insisting on some give-and-take from both sides, and at the time of writing there are now 60 Serbs working at Glama, with one of them about to join the workers' council as a Serb representative.⁴⁴ Sometimes a local KFOR chief or donor agency might be able to pull off this kind of deal, and there is an argument that it is more practical to pursue local agreements on a case-by-case basis rather than waiting to overcome all the obstacles in negotiating overall standards. Nevertheless, greater leverage for coexistence would be gained by a more consistent and coordinated approach across the territory.

ii) The Kosovo Police Service: One of the central tasks envisaged at Rambouillet and assumed by UNMIK was to rebuild a Kosovo police service. This involved establishing a new police school as well as recruiting police. To form this, UNMIK had to take account of the demands for UÇK to play a central role in the future of Kosovo. It refused to grant a block of places in the police service to former UÇK fighters, but conceded that military experience would be considered an advantage, and that the UÇK would have a veto over applications from those who had previously served with the police in Kosovo (Albanians from the 1980s or Serbs).

UNMIK did not impose any measure of transparency in the application of this veto - applicants were not informed if their application had been vetoed and on what grounds, and so had no chance to "clear their name". When Albanian former police appealed to be given a role in combating the crime wave in Kosovo, spokespeople for the UÇK and the parties that grew out of UÇK were quick to point out that in the 1980s Albanian police had been involved in the arrest and torture of suspected "nationalists". For the UÇK the old sores still festered.

Now, with the belated establishment of a small international Ombudsperson's office,⁴⁵ and with municipal authorities being instructed to establish Communities Committees and Mediation Committees to investigate complaints of discriminatory practices, there are at least some channels of redress for individuals discriminated against.⁴⁶ Whether they have the resources to tackle problems such as unfair vetoes is doubtful. Furthermore, at the conceptual level, the absence of guidelines leads one to expect inconsistency, or worse. Where the Kosovo Police Service recruiting was transparent was in announcing the successful applicants. Lists with their names were publicly posted in police stations throughout Kosovo. However, this transparency did not include the extra step that somebody who objected to a particular selection should be able to voice that objection to an official channel. It was not just that the channel did not exist, but that "screening" applicants had only been introduced to make the new force acceptable to the UÇK. Screening was not viewed in a wider confidence-building role.

iii) Refugee return: The need for a more extensive and more authoritative procedure for name-clearing seems particularly acute in planning the return to Kosovo of Serb refugees. Here, the "test case", in the words of the head of UNHCR in Kosovo, is taking place in Osojane, near Istok, in north-western Kosovo. In order to build confidence and equip them to make an "informed choice", the UNHCR arranged for families to pay preparatory visits to the area. However, on the issue of war crimes, there again seems to be no strategy beyond waiting for hard feelings to die away, trusting that in the meantime military protection will be effective.

The choice of Osojane for return was made more than a year in advance of the actual return. Yet despite the allegations that villagers from Osojane had participated in the massacre of Albanians in the neighbouring village of Izbica, little seems to have been done to reassure local Albanians about exactly who would be coming.⁴⁷ When the first Serb men returned to begin reconstructing derelict buildings, they were greeted with a 2,000-strong hostile demonstration. An Albanian cafe-owner opined: "They have committed crimes, they have killed and burned, they don't belong here. This is provocation."⁴⁸ Even a basic courtesy in establishing relationships with the local authorities had not been observed. The mayor of Istok, who did not attend the demonstration, complained that the municipal authorities had not been supplied with a list of names of those coming.⁴⁹

This lack of transparency is plainly harmful to confidence building. UNMIK ultimately needs to enlist the support of Albanians in supporting the process of return, a support that has to extend to standing against those who practise intimidation and random ethnic violence. Once Albanians are confident that they are dealing with "decent Serbs", then they are more likely to act with the kind of civil courage the situation demands. In the municipality of Rahovec, when KFOR declared itself unable to protect Serbs attending municipal meetings, unescorted Kosovo Albanians risked travelling into the minority areas to pick up Serbs who themselves then took the risk of venturing outside the enclave.⁵⁰

In the case of the return to Istok, not only should the local mayor have had the list of who was coming but he should have been asked to organise a welcome. In view of the sacred duties of hospitality in Kosovo Albanian culture, such gestures would have a symbolic power that could well give pause to the armed bands. And in those cases where local party leaders are too timid to go in person to visit the returnees, then there should be delegations of other prominent Albanian opinion formers who have expressed their desire for peaceful coexistence – such as the visits already being organised to minority areas under the auspices of the CDHRF.

The indispensable condition for Albanians offering protection to Serbs, however, is confidence that the Serbs in question were people committed to peaceful coexistence in Kosovo. Hence we return to the need for transparent, explicit and publicly-debated criteria and procedures about screening, rehabilitation and "name-clearing" – procedures that would apply to members of every ethnic group, including the majority. In the absence of such procedures in either Bosnia or Croatia, local peace and human rights groups working for return have relied instead on face-to-face trust-building contacts – meetings on neutral territory, low-profile visits. Kosovo does not yet have grass-roots initiatives such as these: its situation is more extreme and hence the need for a formal procedure is more pronounced.

4d Serbia unearthing the past

Despite Kosovo's progress towards self-government since the war, most Kosovo Serbs still regard themselves as citizens of Serbia. While many Kosovo Albanians welcomed the Serb participation in Kosovo elections, the fact that this was at the urging of Belgrade demonstrates a problem for Albanians: their politics have been conceptualised in antagonism to Serbia. The more reasonable the behaviour of Kosovo Serbs and the more decent the rulers in Belgrade appear to "the international community", the sharper becomes the political conflict over the future of Kosovo. After the war, it was much easier to argue that the Milo_evi_ regime had forfeited any say in the future of Kosovo. It became harder to sustain this argument as Serbia not only becomes more democratic but also investigates its own criminal past.

The first trials of Serb police and soldiers for crimes committed in Kosovo were initiated not in Kosovo but in Milo_evi_'s Serbia.⁵¹ Since Milo_evi_'s fall, the Serbian police and military have both held internal investigations into the conduct of soldiers and police in Kosovo. Serbia's police chief has reported that "a total of 830 crimes against ethnic Albanians were committed by members of the Serbian police force from January 1 to June 10, 1999. As of June 2001, 774 members of the Serbian police force have been accused, 244 have been detained and 66 have been charged".⁵² In April 2000, military officials announced that 245 soldiers had been investigated for crimes in Kosovo during the period 1 March 1998 to 10 June 1999; 183 had been charged and were at some stage in the legal process.⁵³

When Serbs demanded the right to try fellow Serbs for crimes in the war, it was greeted with widespread scepticism as just one more pretext to justify the lack of cooperation with the ICTY in the Hague. However, the post-Milo_evi_ government is bringing more cases than is the international administration in Kosovo; Serbian state TV has broadcast documentaries about the war crimes committed by Serbian forces in Kosovo; and forensic scientists are investigating the mass graves of corpses transported from Kosovo to Serbia during the war. In human terms, these should all be welcome developments – helping Serbia to face up to its criminal past and to recognise the consequences of exclusivist nationalism. However, many Kosovo Albanians continue to regard Yugoslav president Vojislav Kostunica himself as a war criminal. When he proposed a visit to Prishtina for talks with UNMIK, students protested that he should not come until he had "cleared his name". All the Kosovo Albanian newspapers have repeatedly published the photo of Kostunica on a previous visit to Kosovo in 1998 when he visited Serbian paramilitaries and was photographed brandishing a Kalashnikov. This image is a propaganda godsend to reinforce anti-Belgrade attitudes. It helps avoid the uncomfortable truth that under the post-Milo_evi_ regime, Serbs are doing more to acknowledge the unsavoury elements of their recent past than are Kosovo Albanians.

5 Emotional healing

Those who focus on emotional healing argue that many who perpetuate violence (or who support its perpetuation) are suffering from pain and loss, their emotions are disturbed and their perceptions distorted by what they have experienced. They are emotionally wounded by violence or, as it has become common to say, "traumatised". In order to interrupt the cycle of violence, they need to overcome their distress and take charge of their own lives. This will involve restoring or reinventing their net of social relationships, and some argue that it might also be the path towards a new relationship with people from the community that has wronged them.

5a The trauma minefield

In meetings of the Committee for Conflict Transformation Support in the early 1990s, I was struck by the insights of Adam Curle into the distorting power of violence on human perception.⁵⁴ This helped explain the power of rumour to poison relations between neighbours who had been friendly for years, as repeatedly happened in Bosnia and also in various parts of Croatia. However, Adam has tended to speak about this impact in the same breath as "trauma". I cannot make this identification for five main reasons:

- i) Because "trauma" signifies a disorder. I have friends who have felt anger, grief and betrayal during the wars of Yugoslav succession, and whose opinions and perceptions have changed. Of course, there is a connection between their emotions and their rational arguments. However, to hypostatise this change, insisting that its substance is an emotional disorder, would be an insult to their intelligence and rationality.
- ii) Because "trauma" tends to concentrate on particular traumatic "events". The attitudes of Kosovo Albanians have been formed by the protracted experience of living under "occupation" in the 1990s, of being unemployed or - for the hundreds of thousands of Kosovo Albanians who went into exile at that time - of being socially marginalised.
- iii) Because "trauma" becomes the pervasive cause of other forms of alienation and anomie which abound after a war.
- iv) Because "trauma" feeds into the all-too-common tendency to "play the victim", thereby helping people evade their own responsibility for and complicity in the past situation.
- v) Because the diagnosis "trauma" leads to the problematic prognosis of "trauma projects" or "trauma counselling". Writing about their experience with refugees in Croatia, Nina Pecni_ and Paul Stubbs have noted that trauma work can "promote dependency, rather than self-help, growth and empowerment".⁵⁵

The concept of "trauma" has dominated discussion of psychosocial recovery from war and violence in recent years. Easily picked up by the media and the local population, it has also been popular with funders. Bracken and Petty noted the "steady increase in the budget allocated to [trauma] projects by the major international donors ...[reaching] a peak in 1993-94 with the simultaneous crises in the former-Yugoslavia and Rwanda, then a levelling off - possibly - until the next major genocide or mass outrage filmed by the Western media".⁵⁶ That next outrage was Kosovo.

The Bracken and Petty book is largely a reaction by fellow-professionals against those who present trauma as a post-war "hidden epidemic" and themselves as having the antidote. The contributors argue that "trauma counselling" is a Western approach that is being exported to other societies without adequately studying those societies. The "trauma" perspective, they suggest,

- i) Is informed by Western therapeutic assumptions about bringing emotions to the surface and verbalising pain. Hence it ignores both the healing resources within the local culture and different ways of being that might exist in a local tradition.
- ii) Turns the focus inward on the individual rather than addressing the social context. What a person may need most is to look outwards towards the reconstruction or reinvention of their social world.
- iii) Uses a value-free, non-judgemental medical term "trauma" that is appropriate in dealing with a natural catastrophe, but avoids issues of responsibility when the devastation has been deliberately wrought by human action. Such questions cannot be shirked if victims are to make sense of what has happened to their lives.

This critique seeks to put trauma work in perspective as one possible component of a broader programme of psychosocial recovery, refocusing it away from an individualistic towards a more integrated and community-oriented approach.

5b International intervention

To look at the question of what forms of international "intrusion" are appropriate in such a culturally-bound and sensitive area as psychosocial recovery, perhaps it is worth looking back to the time before Kosovo was the object of international interest. In the 1980s, many Kosovo Albanians found themselves subject to ethnic violence. This was particularly so for political prisoners and conscripts.

Conscription was an ordeal for Albanians in Yugoslavia. The multi-ethnic policy of the time was to send conscripts to units with an ethnic mix. Unfortunately for Albanians, this consigned them to being a small minority among Slavs, at best discriminated against, at worst systematically bullied. In the 1980s, some 54 conscripts were returned dead to Kosovo, apparently from suicide,⁵⁷ while in 1987 an Albanian conscript went berserk and opened fire on fellow-conscripts, killing four and wounding five others.⁵⁸ One could surmise that the whole generation of conscription age suffered emotional damage, but the evidence is only anecdotal. Some Albanians were successful soldiers, but I suspect that many more were scarred by their conscription and tended to stay that way. Mothers in Kosovo would sometimes talk about the change in character that sons underwent in the army, that they had "lost their spark", that they seemed disturbed. People noticed it, but, as far as I can tell, tended to leave it to the family, as just one more thing that Albanians had to endure.

It was different for the thousands of political prisoners who suffered violence in Yugoslav prisons in the 1980s. Some were part of nationalist cells and were therefore suffering for their political activity and their beliefs, but many had little connection with political activism and were imprisoned on charges such as "receiving irredentist literature". However, having been a political prisoner became a recognised part of someone's identity. There was honour attached to it. An important power base in Kosovo Albanian politics became the "political prisoners faction". Ultimately, this faction rallied behind the Kosova Liberation Army, but earlier it had played a vital role in the development of the nonviolent struggle. The two most prominent political prisoners were rare voices for dialogue for Serbs, both saying that although it was Serbs who imprisoned them, it was other Serbs who helped them survive.⁵⁹ In the early 1990s both of them were closely involved with the Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF), a body formed specifically to document human rights violations, taking testimony from victims and then working to make their findings visible. This process of "naming the violence" was vital to the nonviolent struggle. The CDHRF's network in the municipalities was largely built by former political prisoners. Every time Serbian police committed an act of violence in a Kosovo village, either the CDHRF or the dominant political party of that era, the LDK (Democratic League of Kosova), would send a human rights reporter to collect testimony and also to calm the situation, to explain the need for nonviolence.

It is worth highlighting the elements that helped the former prisoners overcome their ordeal in a way that, it seems, conscripts did not:

- * their sense of identity, place in the community, and participation in a network;
- * the opportunity to act in support of those who suffered similar violence or in order to prevent it;
- * the example of certain leaders.

In short, the key was the social resources of their own community.

The experience of 1998 and especially of 1999 was far more widespread and far more damaging for Kosov Albanians. Nevertheless, the basis for international intervention should have incorporated a respect for what local people can do through their own self-organisation, looking for the "something extra" that internationals could add.

It is axiomatic that international interveners should respect local traditions and use what these may offer in terms of, say, psychosocial recovery or conflict resolution. What also needs noting, however, is how local people view those traditions. In the 1990s, the Kosovo Albanian aspiration to join the rest of Europe was used as an argument to transform some baneful local traditions, most notably in the Campaign for the Reconciliation of Blood Feuds and in the work of feminist groups challenging traditional attitudes to women's literacy.⁶⁰ In general, the widespread aspiration to be "modern Europeans" led Kosovo Albanians to be open to Western practices and to see them as a resource for innovation in Kosovo.

After 1995, several women decided that the issue of "domestic violence" should no longer be subordinated to the overarching "national question", that the community had to address its own problems and worst traditions and not just blame everything on "the Serbs". It is more than a coincidence that some of the most prominent of these women, for instance the founders of the Centre for the Protection of Women and Children (CPWC), were previously involved in the CDHRF. They knew from the CDHRF the importance of "naming the violence", a theme they also found in the work of the foreign feminists with whom they were in contact.

5c Good and bad practice

There was a rush among humanitarian agencies to get involved in Kosovo immediately after the war. Unfortunately, few agencies had expertise in Kosovo and most international staff were on short-term contracts. Their activity was often funding-led. Given the trend for trauma counselling and the enormous media exposure of the war in Kosovo, it was predictable that the trauma workers would be at the forefront, hurriedly mounting fundable projects without having adequate knowledge of or contacts with the local population.

Many arrived without sufficient briefing. A classic example is of the Western expert lecturing on trauma who did not realise that immediately after the war and during the first post-war winter many Kosovo family groups were sleeping in one room. When asked by a mother for advice about her daughter waking and screaming in the night, the lecturer offered "well, first, don't let her sleep alone", only for the mother to explain "but there are 20 of us in the room". The story may be apocryphal, but it rings true to Kosovo Albanians.⁶¹

The Kosova Assessment on Violence Against Women (KAVAW) has criticised trauma counsellors for being out of touch with the needs of women, particularly with mothers caring for their families. What women needed, it suggested, was less help in expressing their hurt than advice on managing their symptoms, on how to cope and carry on. The same report also notes that some Western trauma counsellors expressed disapproval that local women's groups encouraged singing and dancing.⁶² The "prescriptive" attitude of such counsellors, advocating Western "talk therapies" over other aids to recovery, is exactly what Bracken et al have criticised.

Natale Losi, manager of the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) project Psychosocial Trauma Response in Kosovo, has roundly criticised "the arrogance and thoughtlessness of most of the international experts who swarmed over the entire territory. Most of them had arrived with toolboxes of pre-packaged instruments, of which PTSD [Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder] was the most popular."⁶³ IOM organised an international seminar in Prishtina to discuss best practice in post-war psychosocial and trauma work. In general, its contributors regret that the term trauma has become a cover-all word to denote any emotional reaction to the suffering or loss of war. They see grief and anger not as a disorder but as a healthy response to loss and suffering. They do not see psychosocial work as an alternative to war crimes investigations. In general they argue that the key is to treat local people as protagonists, to acknowledge their role in supporting each other, to respect the methods historically used in their culture prior to the days of professional psychosocial intervention, and to restore the social ties the war has broken.

As well as reviewing international practice in Kosovo, the IOM made an important contribution by setting up an innovative, participatory and inter-disciplinary one-year diploma course in psychosocial counselling for 40 University of Prishtina students. This course not only responds to the need for training in such counselling, it was also a small step illustrating how international humanitarian agencies could help revive the University of Prishtina, formerly a vital centre of leadership within the Kosovo Albanian community.⁶⁴

As ethnic cleansing and mass displacement is a collective experience, the psychological recovery needs to be conceived socially too, fostering mutual support and often addressing issues other than psychological damage. Emotional healing is best dealt with in a context that:

- i) Offers something else. For instance, within the IOM Psychosocial and Trauma Response programme there have also been drama productions and video workshops. These attract people interested to learn new skills or to develop their talent, while providing a collective setting where they can address issues about the past and explore their own emotions.
- ii) Is based on using and strengthening social networks. In Gjakova, Medicos Sin Fronteras (the Spanish branch of Médecins Sans Frontières) established a team of more than 20 local people, half with a medical background, who could support each other while reaching out to others who have also suffered. Believing that the most insidious psychosocial impact of war is the destruction of the bonds between the individual and the community, they suggest that the very process of trying to restore these bonds is healing.⁶⁵

5d Less counselling, more organising

Discussion of post-war emotional healing often focuses on three particular groups: children, usually the most vulnerable members of a community; women, who as well as having faced the threat of rape are often those who bear the load of "caring" in society; and former-combatants, who not only have been exposed to violence but have learned to use violence.

i) Children: Reaching children has been relatively straightforward thanks to the school system. Unicef began the first trainings for teachers in 1998, and in 1999 many other bodies joined in. As well as learning to identify symptoms of disturbance that would indicate special attention, teachers have had support in coping with learning disabilities. What seems clear, however, is that children's involvement in post-war violence should not generally be treated as an expression of "trauma". One might suppose that their own recent experience did predispose some children and youth more or less spontaneously to join in the torching of Serb houses shortly after the Serbian military withdrawal. However, there is evidence that Albanians wanting to buy Serb-owned houses paid children to throw stones and harass the owners.⁶⁶

In Lipjan, 2,500 Kosovo Albanian students attend a secondary school in a Serbian neighbourhood. (In a reverse of the situation in the 1990s, Serb pupils go to private schools.) In autumn 2000, an increase in the incidence of stone-throwing at the cars and houses of Serbs prompted the OSCE Field Office to arrange a meeting with the school staff and pupils where it became clear that outsiders orchestrated the stone-throwing. They identified a number of measures to limit the access of outsiders to the school and to improve what the school itself had to offer, including introducing new courses of agriculture-related technical education. Ultimately it led to the foundation of a community centre for youth open to Serbs and Ashkalis (Albanian-speaking Roma) as well as Albanians.⁶⁷

ii) Women: Women in need of support for recovery have been less easy to reach than children. Here, the women's network that emerged in the second half of the 1990s has played an important role. With the advent of international funding, the groups that existed before the war have been able to help set up groups or centres in other areas.⁶⁸ At an OSCE women's conference in November 1999, Sevdie Ahmeti, of the Centre for Protection of Women and Children (CPWC), was adamant that what most women need to overcome trauma is "not the psychosocial counselling offered" but "jobs and homes to live in".⁶⁹ This was not to deny the need for psychosocial support, indeed the CPWC itself formed a self-help group of rape survivors, but rather to insist that funders adapt their priorities to what local women were saying about their everyday lives.

The Kosova Assessment on Violence Against Women (KAVAW) found that "contrary to popular opinion, it seems that some women *are* looking for support to help them recover from war rape", but their prime requisite is trust and confidentiality. KAVAW therefore praised the Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims for advertising its existence in terms of coping with symptoms, rather than mentioning psychiatric care, and suggested that it would be easier to report rape if it was categorised as a form of torture. What is going on inside a victim's own head can be very disturbing, but social isolation and especially fear of being rejected or misunderstood intensifies this to extremities. In general, the emphasis needs to be on establishing a supportive social fabric where victims can find people to confide in or who have been through something similar.

Various humanitarian agencies supplied materials for sewing or knitting circles of rural women. As well as being useful in terms of income generation for the family, these circles provided a site where women could gather and support each other both in coming to terms with what happened and in coping with the present. Eventually some of these groups combined to set up an outlet in Prishtina to sell some of the clothes they produce.

If that was an appropriate development based on women's traditional work,⁷⁰ no less appropriate was the initiative of the Norwegian People's Aid in forming what was probably the world's first all-women de-mining team.⁷¹ The women, mainly in their 20s, and including widows, found this work a way not only of taking themselves out of their inward-looking home environment, but also a contribution to the safety of everybody in Kosovo, especially children. They gained status - the project manager said his best de-miners were women as they were more patient and less inclined to take short cuts - as well as bringing home a useful salary. The programme itself had other innovative features: mothers were encouraged to bring their children with them to the five-week training course, whilst Muslims from Bosnia were involved as trainers and leaders.⁷²

iii) Former-combatants: The IOM has been the body most concerned with the rehabilitation of former-combatants from the UÇK. Its Information Counseling and Referral Service (ICRS) is an integrated programme, primarily addressing socio-economic needs but also including a psychosocial element. It began by registering and surveying former UÇK fighters. For those wanting to return to civilian life, the IOM assessed their training needs, provided vocational training at one of 11 centres or through a special fund, offered seed money for new projects, and referred former-combatants to particular employment opportunities.⁷³

Nearly 3,000 of these former-combatants are now permanent members of the Kosovo Protection Corps (TMK), a body set up to do public works and respond to civil emergencies. UNMIK's theory is that this offers former UÇK members an opportunity to serve the community in a different way. By September 2000, TMK members had completed 76 work projects, mainly reconstruction and cleaning. The training organised by the IOM has covered de-mining, fire fighting, and various reconstruction skills and, in addition, includes components about community relations, human rights, and even forgiveness.⁷⁴ Leaving aside the controversies about the TMK,⁷⁵ the outstanding examples of the TMK's potential contribution to peace in Kosovo have come in Gjilan where, at the instigation of the international volunteer organisation Balkan Sunflowers, TMK members built a Roma Resource Centre and formed a work crew with Serbs to reconstruct the City Park.⁷⁶

In the post-war situation, some UÇK members expected to be honoured, even to be given the victor's privileges of a greater say in how their society should be run. But many also realised that there were families to be supported, homes to be rebuilt, and a winter to survive. For the majority of former-combatants, dealing with the emotional damage of war has had to wait until such practical issues were resolved. It was not until February 2001 that the ICRS programme embarked on a systematic assessment of the psychosocial needs of former-combatants. If this delay goes against the tendency of agencies to rush in and offer counselling as soon as possible, it especially makes sense with former-combatants. They had the training and the motivation to take up arms, to risk violence against them, to inflict violence on others. Above all, they had to learn to control their emotions in the face of violence - their lives could depend on this.

The youth organisation Forum offered computer training as a help in the reintegration of veterans. In February 2000, Forum interviewed one of these veterans, a 25-year-old who returned from western Europe to join the UÇK in April 1998. After the arrival of NATO troops, he says "I was drunk for about four months, I didn't give a fuck about anything!" Nevertheless, amid the bravado and the jokes, there are serious reflections:

There are cases when one just crashes psychologically and doesn't know what to do, so he starts to torture his own mind, and that is exactly what should not be done in the war, because as soon as you do that, you become more vulnerable and more susceptible to be killed by the enemy ... You always have to keep a type of balance, because there are all kind of emotions.⁷⁷

In 1993, through War Resisters' International, I helped organise a tour of Serbia and Croatia for a US Vietnam veteran, Greg Payton. At the time many Serb anti-war voices were warning their own society of the danger of the "Vietnam syndrome", of what war would do to a generation of conscripts; we knew of some veterans' demands for compensation for injuries, and we knew too that women's groups were reporting a rise in the incidence and gravity of domestic violence. At his de-briefing in London, Greg told us that probably it had been "too soon" for us to expect many soldiers who had fought in Croatia to open up, to reflect on the meaning of the war to themselves, to recognise the emotional damage they had suffered, and above all to step out of line with their community. This was particularly so in Croatia where, as in Kosovo, the war was defined as "defensive".

iv) Beyond target groups: In the case of women and children, the connection between "emotional healing" and "interrupting the cycle of violence" has to be considered a long-term approach. Its immediate contribution is in changing the atmosphere in which one can discuss the experience of violence, its effects and an outlook for the future. Perhaps the most difficult social group to reach - and, after former-combatants, the most likely to crank up the cycle of violence - are men who feel they failed in their manly duty to protect and provide for their families. They are more like the conscripts referred to earlier: they lack forums to discuss the failures that torment them, to express the pain they feel about those they lost or who were violated, or to share the fear that they have forfeited the respect of their children and women. All this after a ten year period during which their masculine status had been eroded.

Perhaps making space for this discussion has more to contribute to interrupting the cycle of violence than has trauma counselling.

6 Forgiveness

From President Clinton down, international visitors to Kosovo have pleaded the need for forgiveness.⁷⁸ Many Albanians argue that there will be no significant movement towards peaceful coexistence between Serbs and Albanians until the Serbs acknowledge what they have done - until they "repent", it could be said. The converse argument is that it is for the strong and righteous to "forgive" - in Hannah Arendt's words "forgiveness serves to undo the deeds of the past, whose 'sins' hang like Damocles' sword over every new generation."⁷⁹

Today the largest body of Kosovo Serbs minded to work for coexistence are those aligned with the Orthodox Church, either church leaders such as Bishop Artemije or Hieromonk Sava Janji_ (dubbed by the media "cybermonk") or politicians now considered "moderate". To Albanian eyes, these politicians tend to have skeletons in their cupboards, while the Church is resented for its historic role as the voice of Serbian grievances in Kosovo as well as for the ultra-nationalism of certain bishops. If Artemije and Sava have been forthright in their criticisms of the wrongs done by Serbs to Albanians, their statements still contain the sense of being a victim - Kosovo Serbs were the victims of the regime's manipulation, not the protagonists who actually handed Milo_evi_ his opportunity.

Their repentance is limited not just because of pressures from more nationalist elements within the Church, but also because they remain responsible for documenting what is now being done to their flock in Kosovo and to their church buildings. In this function, they have not broken with the hyperbole historically typical of the victim narrative - entitling their pamphlet on the post-war desecration of Serbian churches *Crucified Kosovo*. Because of these limits, the penitence of Artemije and Sava evokes little forgiveness. Rather Albanians prefer to believe the rumours that monasteries are harbouring war criminals.

Even concrete and life-saving actions by Serb monks have brought little recognition. The monastery at Decani, then home of Father Sava, was widely recognised in 1998 for its humanitarian work with both Albanians and Serbs. In 1999, one of the last acts of the Decan monks before the arrival of NATO was to drive into the town and rescue 150 of the remaining 270 Albanians from the last rampage of the withdrawing Serb troops.⁸⁰ Unfortunately, within a week, the monastery was itself attacked by Albanians and required KFOR protection. If Serbian "repentance" is supposed to mean putting the fate of yourself, your family and your community, in the hands of the erstwhile enemy, then few Kosovo Albanians have done much to encourage it.

One of the leading Kosovo Albanian voices for forgiveness has been Adem Demaçi, previously dubbed "Kosovo's Mandela" as he has spent 27 years as a political prisoner. The former political representative of the UÇK, in June 2000 on the first anniversary of the Yugoslav withdrawal from Kosovo, he was invited to address a rally celebrating the role of the UÇK. The crowd politely received vague calls from former UÇK leaders⁸¹ for the renunciation of violence, but whistled and booed Demaçi's appeal:

"Today I call on all of you to join another battle, the battle for peace, for the future, for coexistence. Do not forget the Serbian people who remain today in Kosova. They are in a difficult position. Not even the Serbian regime likes their presence here. Help them. They are depressed and scared and it is up to you to create safe conditions and freedom for them. Only then will you be able to enjoy your own freedom."⁸²

Upon the fall of Milo_evi_, Demaçi was the first prominent Albanian to make public appearances in Belgrade - both on TV and in public meetings. Here he was absolutely direct that Serbs had to abandon their "colonial and hegemonic" attitudes for there to be peaceful coexistence in Kosovo, but the most important means for this he saw was dialogue.⁸³

A more recent political prisoner, Flora Brovina, on her return to Prishtina after the fall of Milo_evi_, called on Kosovo to compete with Serbia to establish democracy, tolerance and understanding:

"We should prove that we know how to build and govern a society compatible with all international standards. We can do this first by showing we can forgive, that we are capable of accepting all citizens of Kosovo as equal, regardless of their national, religious or political affiliation."⁸⁴

A third prominent voice for "forgiveness" has been Don Lush Gjergj, a Catholic priest who was one of the leaders of the Campaign for the Reconciliation of Blood Feuds. "Kouchner and Thaçi say it's too early for reconciliation, but I think we have to start now, otherwise we will never get there".⁸⁵ "When we were resolving blood feuds, we told people that revenge is fratricide, which is the same as suicide. [Today, again] we have suffered more from the killing of our people by our people than from murders by the Serbs".⁸⁶

The campaign against the blood feuds functioned by approaching the family of the victim - the one whose duty was now to "avenge the blood" - and to urge them to reach out in forgiveness "in the name of the people, the youth and the flag". Once they had agreed, there would be a communal ceremony where the forgiving family gave its *besa* (word of honour) and the reconciliation was "guaranteed" by the whole crowd witnessing the event.⁸⁷

Earlier, in discussing return, I suggested the value of organising some kind of Albanian welcome for returning Serbs. I cannot envisage anything on the scale or with the power of the reconciliation events in the blood feud campaign, but it is nevertheless relevant to recall these. These ceremonies were emotional occasions. Such forgiveness was a huge step, a father saying that the murderer of his son should go unpunished. It was also a liberation: the act of forgiveness establishing a basis for a new relationship unburdened by a cycle of violence that had blighted their lives for generations. These new relationships, however, were within the Albanian community, and the reconciliation of blood feuds was essentially a campaign unifying the Albanian population. Even so, at the end of 1999 one youth activist, Jetëmir Bala of Forum, proposed that if Serbs were genuinely willing to apologise, Albanians should again offer their *besa*. There was no follow-up to that suggestion, but subsequently Bala became the coordinator of the Boll Ma! (Enough!) anti-violence campaign, which early in 2001 began putting up posters all over Kosovo.

Inter-ethnic forgiveness is too big a step for many - especially without repentance, without war crimes trials and without reparations. However, one should not infer that resistance to forgiveness means tolerance of violence. On the contrary, there is a growing desire to end violence and the belief that Albanians should live according to the values that their oppressors violated, respecting human rights and trying to include minorities. In launching Boll Ma! Bala advocated a forward-looking basis for action: "I'm proud to be Albanian. I don't want to be ashamed. I don't want to leave that heritage to my children, that we ethnically cleansed Kosovo".⁸⁸

In many respects, it is easier to stay within one's own community and insist on respecting human rights than it is to reach out and seek the essential humanity of members of the enemy community. That is where official processes could be helpful in recognising that there are "decent" Serbs in Kosovo, people worth reaching out to for dialogue and cooperation.

Some open-hearted gestures could change the atmosphere. For instance, it is understandable that Kosovo Albanians insist on displaying their own flag. The first Albanian demonstrations in post-war Yugoslavia in the 1950s were flag-flying, and even after its legalisation in Kosovo in 1968, Albanians could be arrested in Macedonia and Montenegro for flying the black double-headed eagle on a red background.⁸⁹ UNMIK and KFOR vainly tried for a while to prevent the flying of this flag on public buildings. What they have not tried to do, but what a small Albanian community radio station in Mitrovica has been willing to do, is to raise the question of what would be a good flag for the new Kosovo, acceptable to each and every community.

7 Drawing a line under the past

One of the most rational strategies for addressing conflict, both at the workshop level and in real life, is to seek for points of common interest between members of communities in conflict. By then taking a "problem-solving" approach, people can lay aside the baggage of the most intractable points of the conflict and the blame and recriminations based on past grievances. While some Kosovo Albanians are willing to take part in workshop exercises along these lines, those who put this approach into practice in daily life have often risked social isolation.

Even before the war - indeed, throughout the 1990s - attempts to initiate dialogue were viewed with suspicion and even hostility. Nevertheless, some groups and some activities offered pointers to a potential civil society strategy involving cooperation to meet common interests and an openness to dialogue.⁹⁰ In the immediate post-war situation, however, such initiatives have been very limited. It was only really among some youth that the international optimism about multi-ethnicity found a resonance in actions such as cross-community cooperation in clearing municipal waste. As time has passed since the war, there has been some shift. On my July 2001 visit, I met Albanians who a year earlier had wanted to work only within their own community but who were now actively looking to involve themselves with the non-Serbian minority groups, while others were willing to reach out and engage in cross-community efforts with "decent" Serbs.

Those Kosovo Albanians who are forward-looking and want to get on with making a better life for the whole community might manage to do this in their own lives. However, at the social level it is impossible simply to ignore the past and the intense feelings it generates. This past is inextricably linked to the most divisive question in Kosovo, that of status and the Kosovo Albanian national aspiration for independence. There are, however, other aspirations and other interests - both at the personal level and at the level of social groups - that provide meeting points between the Albanian and Serb communities in Kosovo where cooperation seems more practical than conflict and that might point to future coexistence.

i) The economy: Many people in their economic activities cannot afford to be blocked by suspicions of what may have happened in the past, and soon after the war some cooperation began at a business level. When a rural Kosovo Albanian dairy is short of supplies of milk, it would seem perverse to refuse to buy the surplus produced in a nearby Serbian village. Such small steps towards economic normalisation are important.

Interestingly, there have been longstanding contacts between Kosovo Albanian trade unionists and Serbia's first independent trade union, Nezavisnost. While Nezavisnost was once considered relatively marginal, it played a significant role in the anti-Milo_evi_ mobilisation and subsequently its membership has multiplied. It remains to be seen what potential there is for Nezavisnost to play a role in bringing Kosovo Serbs into relationship with Kosovo Albanian workers, but the post-war contacts between it and the Kosovo unions have been regular if low-profile.⁹¹

ii) Codes of values: A code with shared elements - be it professional, ethical or religious - can support efforts to overcome other divisions. Religious leaders have now formed Kosovo's first official Inter-faith Council and there have been various inter-religious workshops and joint statements by the leaders of the main religions in Kosovo. The Sarajevo statement of February 2000 by the heads of the Orthodox and Catholic churches and the Chief Mufti of Kosovo described itself as a common statement of moral commitment, looking to the future. It drew a line under the past by acknowledging the suffering in every community.

As an example of a professional code, I think of the director of the library in Prishtina University which was always considered the "National Library". While Serbs removed tons and tons of books, apparently to be pulped, he is determined to retain all the Serbian books in the library. "This is the National Library", he pointed out, "and we have to serve every ethnic group".⁹²

iii) Functional connections: In terms of professional links, the relationship between some professions is closer now than before the war. For example, there are now teachers in both communities who are willing to revise the former curricula (each of which was unacceptable to the other). Similarly there is cooperation between librarians in Mitrovica, something unheard of in the period of direct rule.⁹³ Journalists in Kosovo, on the other hand, now seem to have fewer cross-community contacts than before, although the OSCE has helped to extend these through its journalist training courses.

People with disabilities, the "excluded" in both communities, have long found common cause. Their association, "Handikos", remained a bastion of inter-ethnic cooperation throughout the period of direct rule and continues with the same orientation.⁹⁴ The field of healthcare, however, has often been an ethnic battlefield – from the dismissal of Albanians from the University Medical Faculty in 1990 to the post-war conflict in the hospital in Mitrovica, a warning of worse to come. The cooperation in the vaccination campaigns of 1995-96 was an outstanding exception.⁹⁵

iv) Institutional connections: In the framework being established by UNMIK, there has been much more contact between political leaders. Since the municipal elections of October 2000, there have been contacts between elected Albanians and UNMIK-appointed Serbs, both in the course of their everyday business and in special sessions convened by outside facilitators such as the US Institute for Peace. Also, until the general elections of November 2001, consultative bodies such as the Kosovo Transitional Council included a broad spectrum of Kosovo Albanians plus those in the minority groups disposed to cooperate with UNMIK. Following the election results, some Albanian politicians and commentators made optimistic comments about co-participation in the Assembly where, as a result of occupying the 10 seats reserved for Serbs plus winning a further 12 seats with its proportion of the vote, the Serbian Coalition for Return, Povratak, will be the third largest group.

Perhaps the two Kosovo-wide public institutions that have done most to "model" inter-ethnic cooperation are the Kosovo Police Service and the Kosovo Fire Department.⁹⁶ The Fire Department even has its own insignia, acceptable to both Albanian and Serb.⁹⁷

v) Civil society: The vigour of Kosovo Albanian civil society pre-war has often been exaggerated. Now "civil society" is in a difficult phase. New NGOs have proliferated - some 650 local NGOs have registered with the OSCE since the war, nearly all newly-formed - but usually without a spirit of self-reliance, without an agenda that impels them to action come what may. Probably nothing is more fundable than cross-community initiatives, and so many NGOs mention "multi-ethnic" in their grant applications, but how solidly based are such endeavours is open to doubt. The international administration and agencies with their high wages have creamed off a lot of the local talent, and tends not to deploy them effectively.

On the other hand, it is sometimes easier for Kosovo Albanian groups to find Serb counterparts now than before the war when there was a vacuum in the Serbian community of voluntary organisations genuinely independent of the local authorities. For example, for the first time, Kosovo now has a network of Serbian women's groups and partly with the facilitation of the Belgrade feminists, who had previously shown sisterly solidarity with Kosovo Albanian feminists, there are some contacts between feminists in both communities.

vi) Youth: Youth remains a vital constituency, especially as the majority of the population of Kosovo is under 22 years old. Here there has been a lot of activity. Various international organisations, such as Catholic Relief Services, have been promoting joint youth councils, and a number of municipalities have established community centres mainly for use by youth. Summer 2001 saw a range of playschemes, including multi-ethnic ones organised by Balkan Sunflowers volunteers, and some multi-ethnic visits to other countries.

vii) Prisoners: While the prisoners issue has inflamed Albanian feelings against all Serbs, it seems that as in the 1980s relations between Serb inmates (often democratic oppositionists) and Albanians have normally been of solidarity. This emerged especially during the prison riots in Serbia in November 2000, even with some Serbian banners in support of imprisoned Albanians.⁹⁸

Some Albanians interpret such connections as somehow undermining their national aspirations. In reality, without them, the project of independence without partition is even more likely to be doomed. While other minority groups have little option but to "lump it or leave it", the Serbs have more power to resist, including support among some members of the UN Security Council.

8 Compensation and Reparation

This section is very short. Although there is a large programme of international aid for Kosovo in general, there is no specific compensation on the basis that somebody has been wronged. In view of the problems even in paying the pensions that UNMIK has inherited from the Serbian state, it is hard to envisage that UNMIK embarking on anything like a compensation programme and the parlous state of the Serbian economy absolutely precludes reparations.

9 Memory and Truth

9a Official history versus hidden transcripts

How war is remembered invariably influences how the future develops. In post-1945 Yugoslavia, the "national liberation struggle" of the Partisans became the foundation myth of Titoite socialism. This myth, however, drew a veil over other aspects of this time, such as the existence of non-Communist resistance movements or the ethnic blood-letting under the cover of war. Moreover, if rising functionaries did not have a record of honourable struggle with the Partisans, they were quite likely to be furnished with one.⁹⁹ The history that was suppressed did not vanish. It was handed down through families and persisted as a "hidden transcript" that belied the official narrative taught in schools.¹⁰⁰

A number of analysts suggest that the lack of what would now be called a "truth and reconciliation process" after the Second World War was one of the roots of Yugoslavia's disintegration.¹⁰¹ Titoite socialism celebrated "Brotherhood and Unity" without acknowledging the recent past of "fratricide". After Tito's death in 1980, research into this suppressed history became one of the platforms for the relaunch of nationalism, especially when the researchers themselves faced punishment for what they were saying. Unfortunately, instead of research offering a coherent but complex "alternative narrative", rival nationalist interpretations of history were propounded, often more propaganda than scholarship.

The Kosovo Albanian collective memory of the Second World War is that those who joined the Partisans were promised self-determination and so felt cheated by the post-war dispensation, whilst thousands were to lose their lives in the "Pacification" programme of 1944-45. When Kosovo Albanians remark that the international advocacy of "multi-ethnic democracy" smacks of Tito's "Brotherhood and Unity", they are evoking that previous post-war betrayal.

In the new post-war situation, Kosovo Albanians are determined that their memory of the Milo_evi_ era will prevent any repetition. The collective memory avers that Serbia has forfeited any claim to control Kosovo. It aims to protect the population from their previous oppressors. Should any international body be foolish enough to try to push Kosovo back under Serbia, there would be the utmost mobilisation for resistance, almost certainly military resistance.

9b The past as an excuse

UNMIK spokespeople have criticised Kosovo Albanian "tolerance" for members of their own community who violate the human rights of minorities, while a phrase used repeatedly has been that there exists a "climate of impunity" for those who commit ethnic crimes.

It is hard to gauge the extent of this acceptance of violence at any point in time. For instance, how did parents behave if they found their children had been torching Serbian homes? One experienced international aid worker told me of a father who approached her, not knowing what to say to his 13-year-old son, and I can imagine there must have been many in that position. There were also Albanians even at the height of the revenge attacks willing to reach across the ethnic boundaries, offering to do the shopping for Serbs too scared to leave their homes. However, in the face of intimidation they soon decided that it was better to leave that kind of support to UNMIK.

Intimidation, in general, clouds the issue. Upon leaving Kosovo, the founder of the OSCE journalist protection programme complained of the high level of self-censorship by journalists scared of armed factions.¹⁰² The initial wave of often spontaneous violence transmuted into something much more organised and more sinister, and which has increasingly been directed against fellow-Albanians. This violence has produced a reaction against itself, as witnessed in the trend towards greater cooperation with police bodies and in the preference for Rugova's LDK over Thaçi's UÇK-identified PDK in the municipal and general elections. Nevertheless at various social levels, there are instances of those who should be setting the standards failing to do so.

I think of the school principal in Dragash. Several of my colleagues in the Balkan Peace Team were present at the school anniversary performances in May 2000. Most of the performances were by Albanian pupils, many along "patriotic" lines. But when one of the few Gorani pupils began reading something she had written in her own language, she was heckled and booed by Albanian pupils. The school principal merely appealed for order, and the celebration continued with more Albanian performances. The principal did not take the opportunity to publicly speak up on behalf of the Gorani minority nor to challenge the attitude of the booing Albanians.¹⁰³

Among Kosovo Albanians, the self-image of being collectively traumatised has slipped easily into the pre-existing mindset that they are a victim people.¹⁰⁴ "Collective traumatised" has featured strongly in the explanations they offer for post-war violence, and probably this understanding has helped people resign themselves to the inevitability of that violence. The diagnosis "trauma", it seems, reduces the responsibility of both individuals and communities for their current actions.¹⁰⁵

It is not only Kosovo Albanians who offer "trauma" as an excuse. The French judge who headed the Justice section in UNMIK formally accepted the findings of the OSCE Legal Monitoring Unit that it was not yet possible to have an impartial trial in Kosovo. However, she then went on to criticise the report for not taking into account "the real world here... Who are they, these judges and prosecutors? ... They are traumatised, most of them are insecure. They may have contracted bad habits from another era." Yet, she went on, they were being asked to act as "heroes".¹⁰⁶

The past provides an inexhaustible source of obstacles. Before the fall of Milo_evi_ a group of Albanians were asked about the obstacles they saw to peace: their list not surprisingly included the prisoners in Serbia, the lack of war crimes trials, the number of missing, the lack of democratisation in Serbia. Nearly a year later, when Milo_evi_ was in detention in the Hague, when Serbia had begun exhuming mass graves and trying criminals, and when most Albanian prisoners had been released from Serbia, some members of this group still insisted on interpreting as threatening the very steps that had been taken to remove these obstacles.¹⁰⁷ The opening of some hope that something might change for the better without conceding all their demands simply did not fit into their paradigm.

9c Ethnic memory and stereotypes

One problem with collective memory is that it tends to deal in stereotypes, and in a situation of ethnic conflict, it tends to be self-justifying and to exclude the truth lodged in the Other's memory. Looking at the other side's truths is perhaps the most difficult thing to ask of a population that has undergone so much. I know of two Kosovo Albanian publications available in English that have given a sympathetic treatment to what Serbs now in Belgrade have felt upon leaving Kosovo.¹⁰⁸

What also tends to be omitted from the homogenised ethnic collective memory is the number of Serbs who broke ranks at the height of the ethnic cleansing in order to help Albanians.

Since hearing Albanians speak of Serbs helping them escape in March-June 1999, I have collected the following stories from English-language publications:

- * Orthodox monks, especially in Decani, protected local Albanians from Serbian forces (see above);
- * A local police chief tipped off villagers that the paramilitaries were about to descend;
- * A military commander protected Albanians sheltering in the local Catholic church;
- * A Serb policeman helped an Albanian judge;
- * A Serb soldier, recognising an elderly Albanian as someone who had fought alongside his grandfather in the Partisans, stopped his colleagues beating him;
- * A doctor sheltered 100 Albanians - doctors and their families - in his hospital.¹⁰⁹

Apparently, there were many examples of Yugoslav soldiers - especially it would appear Montenegrins - offering help, including food, to the columns of refugees fleeing from their homes. At the border with Blace, where the Macedonian authorities forced terrified and famished refugees to wait up to two days before permitting entry, there were FRY soldiers distributing bread.

There are also stories indicating the limits to the power of individuals - of the Serb who was himself beaten to death when intervening to stop a gang beating up Albanians.¹¹⁰ And, inevitably, there are many stories of people betraying trust. A truthful collective memory is bound to be complex.

A report on human rights violations by Kosovo Albanians might seem an unlikely place to find further stories, but the detailed testimony in the Humanitarian Law Centre's report *Abductions and Disappearances of non-Albanians in Kosovo* (Belgrade, 2001) brings to light aspects of cross-community relationships that I have not seen documented elsewhere. The witnesses interviewed tell of Kosovo Albanians moving in with Serbian families for protection during the ethnic cleansing. More common were efforts by Albanians to help Serbs who previously had tried to help them. This includes preventing the UÇK "police" from abducting individual Serbs from their workplace, Albanian civilians intervening to demand the release of known Serbs, and some Albanians providing Serbs with a letter testifying to their help. Unfortunately, while at times this saved lives and stopped torture, it was unable to provide sufficient security for people to remain in their homes or, indeed, to prevent abandoned homes from being torched.¹¹¹

The work to prepare the ground for the return of Serb refugees to Kosovo would be greatly strengthened by a more systematic attempt to collect and publish information about individual, named Kosovo Serbs who not only have "clean hands" but who actually took risks in order to save Albanian lives. Remembering and honouring such actions would surely at least raise a small corner of the curtain of condemnation that currently covers all Serbs. Indeed, the memory of acts of "civil courage" from the "other side" should fortify the determination of every community to live up to their proclaimed values.

Two of the most important organisations set up in Kosovo during the nonviolent struggle have gone to the length of honouring Belgrade Serbs: the CDHRF gave a place of honour to visitors from Belgrade at its 10th anniversary event in December 1999, while in May 2000 the humanitarian network the Mother Theresa Association awarded honorary membership to the Belgrade human rights activist Natasha Kandi_, the director of the Humanitarian Law Centre. I know of no other public actions that carry the message "this is the kind of Serb we want to have living in Kosovo".

9d Truth and dialogue

Ultimately, seeking the truth requires dialogue - the openness to hear the Other's version (or versions) and to acknowledge the complexity of experience. If the religious leaders have already talked about the suffering of all inhabitants of Kosovo in the war, it will mark a veritable paradigm shift if a wider cross-section of Kosovo Albanians and Serbs are ever able to see the past in terms of their common suffering rather than as rival narratives of victimisation.

Would a Truth Commission be a useful forum for such dialogue? My view is that there is little point in establishing an official Truth Commission in Kosovo until there has been more progress towards settling its future status. Otherwise this Commission would not be a mutual search for truth by people who desire a new basis for coexistence, but rather one more arena for a propaganda struggle, Albanians and Serbs again competing to make the other look bad. The idea may be worth pursuing once there is clarity about the process for deciding on Kosovo's future status. Even then, defining its remit would raise complex issues and be fraught with difficulties. For instance, should a Truth Commission take up issues from the 1980s in an effort to reassure Serbs that the new Kosovo would be different? These subjects remain very touchy in both communities. What powers would the Commission have to subpoena people to appear before it? Would they then be immune from prosecution?

At this stage, rather than looking for one high-profile forum for dialogue, there needs to be a plurality of initiatives in a variety of sectors and taking a variety of forms. I have mentioned a number of examples in various parts of this paper, and many more could be imagined. At some point, I do hope for a paradigm shift among Kosovo Albanians - a change of mood, a self-confidence and security that would enable them to reach out and help Serbs "adjust to the new realities".

10 Conclusion

The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) works under the banner "Bringing peace to Kosovo". The themes I have addressed cannot by themselves be expected to bring peace or even to end further violence. In addition to the experience of war, many other factors in the post-war situation have encouraged violence to take root and to flourish, while the basic causes of the conflict remain largely untouched.

This paper is largely concerned with issues of coexistence in Kosovo as it is now, an international protectorate whose ultimate status is so open that there is no agreed process on how it should be decided. Rather than discussing issues such as status, this paper looks more at creating the conditions to prepare a more fruitful debate.

I have treated **justice** not just as investigating and punishing those criminally responsible for crimes of war, but also as establishing a basis for distinguishing between different degrees of guilt and innocence in members of the former oppressor community and as a process offering opportunities for "name clearing" and rehabilitation. Transparency in this, it seems to me, is fundamental in any process of confidence-building to establish peaceful coexistence in Kosovo or to facilitate the peaceful return of refugees from minority groups.

I have looked at **emotional healing** beyond a focus on reliving or digesting the experience of "traumatic events", rather stressing the need to support people in managing the problems of daily life and in reconstructing supportive social networks, especially in opening spaces to reflect on topics normally not mentioned.

While those two sections include a number of criticisms of aspects of the international operation, the subsequent sections - on the related themes of forgiving the past, re-orienting towards the future, and reaching out to members of the community of the former oppressor - mainly describe some of the more promising tendencies among Kosovars.

Truth is perhaps the most fundamental theme. Denying the past is a sure recipe for future conflict. So too is clinging to an ethnicised version of truth constructed out of stereotypes and excluding the Other's perceptions and memories. Unfortunately, that is exactly what is happening with the dominant collective memory in each community, Serb as much as Albanian.

If the description of activities in this paper seems like a patchwork, that largely reflects a reality where there is little concerted action to change the atmosphere of cross-community relations. Reports from various workshops – both inter-ethnic workshops and those just with Kosovo Albanians – often contain "brainstormed" suggestions for action. But there remains a huge gap between the idea and its realisation. There is not the "peace constituency" – the network of those operating at various social levels and offering each other mutual support – to sustain the enthusiasm born in such workshops in the face of attitudes in their ethnic community. One cannot say that a "culture of peace" exists in Kosovo on any scale, and one has to search hard to find points of gestation. The international operation and in particular its failure to operate with transparency bears some responsibility for this, but the majority ethnic group cannot absolve itself of responsibility. Short of a complete "paradigm shift", I look for three specific changes of attitude within the Albanian community.

- i) **Re-framing identity.** In particular, it is time to shed victim identities and instead to assume the responsibility for shaping life in Kosovo. I am not so optimistic as to envisage that there will soon be a shared “Kosovar” identity that takes precedence over the ethnic identity of Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo, but other elements of identity – gender, generation, occupation – can be a basis for cooperation across the ethnic divide. It is a sign of hope that some Albanian police now take pride in the civil courage shown by their Serb colleagues who carry out their duties in the face of the abuse and even physical attacks from their own community.
- ii) **Creating a collective memory** that recognises the wrongdoing and suffering on all sides, and honours those who oppose the violence that emanates from their own community. Although time may dull the pain, the past will remain a continuous source of grievance for both the Albanian and the Serb communities. At the same time, the past can inspire higher standards of behaviour if it is recognised that even in the extreme conditions of March-June 1999 and June-July 1999 there were people – first on the Serbian side, and then on the Albanian side - who acted on the basis of a common humanity.
- iii) **Insisting on human rights standards.** In the face of “inhuman” cruelty (in reality, all-too-human cruelty) and “bestiality” (in reality, a calculated sadism of which non-human beasts are not capable), it can be hard to see the “humanity” of the Other. One can counsel distinguishing between a person and their actions, hating the sin while trying not to hate the sinner; one can also attempt to understand the human weakness of those who are swept along by the tide. But in the end, without ignoring the consequences of a criminal course of action or shutting off a sense of solidarity with those who suffer, it is hard not to hate. However, even when one cannot forgive, there are some minimum standards below which one should not sink: social reconstruction demands respecting the rights of those one detests. This respect is in itself an assertion of one’s own humanity, an affirmation that even when we feel hatred, we will not succumb to it. The concomitant to this, however, is that those who have systematically violated human rights should be answerable for their actions, their rehabilitation dependent on some process of acknowledgement and truth-telling.

Closing the cycle of violence in Kosovo is not a short-term project, and will take many small initiatives, the gradual work of confidence building, and only rarely dramatic gestures of reconciliation. Perhaps the touchstone for coexistence in Kosovo is the issue of Return, above all of Serbs and Roma. What are Albanians willing to do to create conditions conducive to the return of Serbs and Roma, even to welcome them and to protect them in the face of the threat from armed Albanians? This is not an issue to be left in the hands of UNMIK.

End Notes

¹ Most commentators date the period of autonomy from the Constitution of 1974, but important steps towards autonomy began after the Communist Party Brioni Plenum of 1966 and constitutional changes were made in 1971.

² It would enrich the discussion enormously to be able to do this in relation to the other communities in Kosovo, especially the Serbs. However at this time I am not in a position to do so.

³ According to the annual report of the Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms for 1998, Serbian operations killed 1,934 Albanians (nearly a quarter of them unidentified), and shelled, burnt or looted 41,538 homes. Mercy Corps International reported a peak of 411,769 displaced people (*The Times*, 14 September 1998).

⁴ A note on the terms I use to refer to various ethnic groups in Kosovo. For reasons of convenience, i) I follow local usage in using "Kosovo Serb" to cover both Serb and Montenegrin residents of Kosovo, ii) I do not always spell out Kosovo Albanians but simply say "Albanians", iii) I treat Kosovo as separate from Serbia (which administratively it now is), iv) I follow the usage of the international administration in using "Kosovar" to mean resident of Kosovo, as distinct from the previously dominant meaning of "Kosovo Albanian", v) I refer to Serbs, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians, Bosnians, Gorani (Muslim Slavs) and Turks as minority groups, even though most Serbs would prefer to regard themselves as forming part of the majority in Serbia.

⁵ Fehim Rexhepi, "Two Years Later - Albanians and Serbs on Opposite Sides!" (AIM Prishtina, 19 June 2001). AIM is an alternative network of independent media covering the whole of former Yugoslavia since 1993. See: <http://www.aimpress.org>

⁶ Amnesty International reports claims that 1,300 Serbs and 800 Roma have been abducted since July 1999 ("Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Kosovo elections - Time to right the wrongs", AI Index: EUR 70/018/2001, 20 November 2001). The most detailed report, the Humanitarian Law Centre's *Abductions and Disappearances of non-Albanians in Kosovo* (Belgrade, 2001), found that between 12 June 1999 and 31 December 2000, "at least 932 non-Albanians disappeared or were abducted" in Kosovo. "The whereabouts of 593 remains unknown", while 62 of those abducted are known to have been killed. The great majority of these abductions occurred in the first month after Serbian military withdrawal.

⁷ Nowhere is the existence of these two lines more clearly apparent than in the testimonies of Serbs abducted by the UÇK or in its name, especially in the HLC report above. A particularly noteworthy incident concerns the UÇK commander in Prizren, Ekrem Rexha (popularly known as Commander Drini), who secured the release of a number of Serbs, and who at one point appealed to a convoy of departing Serbs: "Don't go. There's no need for you to go. Stay at the seminary for a few days more. The situation is a bit tense now but it will be all right soon." A Serb comments: "I went up to him, because I know him, and asked how we could trust him when KLA members had kidnapped my son and beaten me up. He looked at me – there I was, still in my torn and blood-stained clothes. He didn't reply, just stood there for a while, and then went." (p. 241) Eleven months later, Rexha himself was shot dead outside his home – UNMIK police later charged other former-members of the UÇK.

⁸ The Brahimi report on UN complex peace-keeping operations, suggests that missions should achieve effective partial deployment within 15 days and full deployment within 90 days. *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, 17 August 2000. http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations/ In view of the likelihood that Kosovo would come under international administration, the UN and OSCE should have used the more than 90 days between the close of the Rambouillet negotiations and the end of the war to prepare the rapid deployment of a better prepared mission. As it was, the head of mission, Bernard Kouchner, was not appointed until a month after the end of the war.

⁹ Announcing the closure of the Mines Action Coordination Centre on 4 October 2001, a spokesperson reported that, along with KFOR, it had dismantled some 30,000 mines and cleared 14,500 of the 20,000 unexploded cluster bombs dropped by NATO. Mines and other unexploded ordnance had killed 87 people and injured hundreds more - *Agence France Presse*, 5 October 2001. UNMIK has given a slightly higher figure for those killed, 103 - *Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Mission in Kosovo* (S/2000/1196), 12 December 2000, para 56.

¹⁰ *Peace News*, February 1992.

¹¹ "Rape was projected long before. The aim was to degrade and dishonor the person and the family ... Thousands of women were raped and they are seeking justice", wrote Sevdie Ahmeti of the Centre for the Protection of Women and Children (CPWC), 20 March 2001. The Kosova Assessment on Violence Against Women (KAVAW) surveys evidence from a number of sources: the OSCE, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the CDHRF, the CPWC and other women's groups. It notes that during the Serbian offensives of 1998 and again in March-June 1999 women were often separated from men, held in a variety of buildings (ranging from barns and private houses to hotels, barracks, mosques, a railway station and a football stadium), tortured and raped. The rapes were usually gang rapes, and the rapists usually covered their heads to prevent identification. A number of women were killed after being raped. KAVAW, "No Safe Place: Results of an Assessment on Violence against Women in Kosova" (draft for UNIFEM, April 2000), pp. 55-59. The rape of men is barely documented, although there were press reports in May 1999 that some Albanian men were coerced to engage in oral sex with each other.

¹² With the interlude of the two World Wars, when Kosovo was occupied by enemies of Serbia, from 1912 to 1966, Belgrade sought to alter the demographic balance of Kosovo in favour of Serbs - offering incentives to Serb settlers while "encouraging" Albanian emigration. These policies were defeated, Albanians maintained their majority status in Kosovo, and in the 1970s and 1980s this numeric dominance reached unprecedented proportions, ultimately 9:1.

Kosovo Albanians, too, employed violence and harassment to persuade Serbs to leave. The history of how Kosovo Albanians ruthlessly expelled perhaps 44,000 Serbs and Montenegrins during the Second World War was a taboo subject in socialist Yugoslavia, until the rise of Milošević, and tends to be omitted from the Kosovo Albanian narrative of history.

¹³ In summer 2001 it was confirmed that a number of Albanian detainees - including three US citizens - were executed extra-judicially after the ceasefire agreement.

¹⁴ including the death of four prisoners in the year 2000, Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms Annual Report 2000.

¹⁵ Brovina was sentenced to 12 years, accused of offering medical aid to the UÇK. Kurti, who was well known for his commitment to nonviolence and his vow never to take up arms, worked for several months in the office of Adem Demaçi, then political representative of the UÇK. He was sentenced to 15 years. In both cases, the Belgrade group Women in Black attended their trials as a sign of solidarity. Brovina said that if free she would be working for peace, forgiveness and tolerance in Kosovo. Kurti, on the other hand (and unusually for an Albanian), took a line of political defiance yet continually tried to distinguish between the criminal Serb regime and the Serbian people, repeatedly having to correct the court-appointed interpreter for not making this distinction.

¹⁶ ICTY Prosecutor Carla del Ponte, address of UN Security Council, 21 November 2000.

¹⁷ UNMIK press briefing, 26 July 2001.

¹⁸ It is widely believed that many cadavers were burnt in the Trepça mining complex - indeed international agencies such as Agence France Presse and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty have reported that this was part of the regime's Depth 2 plan to cover up war crimes. However, forensic investigations have found no evidence to substantiate the claims. At the request of Belgrade government ICTY investigators also examined the sites of alleged mass graves of Serbs but without finding any evidence.

¹⁹ *New York Times*, 19 September 2001.

²⁰ More than 70% of those Kosovo Albanians in employment lost their jobs.

²¹ For more detail on the police raids of the 1990s, see Howard Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo* (Pluto Press, 2000), pp. 78-79.

²² See Howard Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*

²³ Quoted in Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, p. 324.

²⁴ Although technically a province of Serbia, the 1974 constitution gave Kosovo federal representation equivalent to a republic. The most significant constitutional difference was that republics had the right to secede.

²⁵ The most illuminating study of this is Julie Mertus's *Kosovo: How Truths and Myths Created a War* (Yale University Press, 1999). In the mid-1990s Mertus interviewed Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Albanians about key events from the 1981 demonstrations to the alleged "poisoning" of thousands of Albanian children in 1990, and found that each community homogeneously adhered to its own "truth".

²⁶ *Newsweek*, 1 September 1999.

²⁷ When I first visited Kosovo in January 1992, there was a quasi-curfew in that street.

²⁸ *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo* (S/1999/779, 12 July 1999), para 121.

²⁹ A brief list of problems would include: i) physical and technical conditions in the court (from lack of security through to lack of computer or interpretation equipment); ii) confusion over the legal code in force - initially UNMIK ruled this would be the legal code of FRY, subject to being overruled where it fell short of international human rights standards. However, Kosovo Albanian judges refused to administer this, persuading UNMIK to reinstate the pre-1989 legal code, with the same proviso about international standards; iii) the legal staff's need for re-training (most had not practised for 10 years, and had not been trained in international humanitarian law); iv) intimidation - of judges, lawyers and witnesses; v) the lack of international judges and prosecutors, and the low calibre/motivation of some who came; vi) the Serbian perception - borne out in reports by the OSCE's own legal monitoring unit - that the courts were ethnically biased, liable to convict Serbs on inadequate evidence but acquit Albanians. In addition, of course, there was the lack of capacity of the international police force, partly being seriously under strength in its first year while also lacking the local knowledge to be an effective investigatory body.

³⁰ UNMIK proposed that the key elements of the proposed court - the presence of international judges and prosecutors - would be integrated into the normal judicial system. Under UNMIK Regulation 2000/64, defendants can apply to have their case heard by a panel containing an international judge. The OSCE report *Voters' Voices* (August 2001) in preparation for the November 2001 general elections confirmed that "Law and Order" was the highest priority concern for Kosovo Albanians, Education was second.

³¹ Andrew Rigby, *Justice and Reconciliation After the Violence* (Lynne Rienner, 2001), p. 34.

³² I put "justice" in inverted commas because there was clearly a combination of motives - a backward-looking motive of vengeance, a forward-looking motive of social cleansing.

³³ Within months, out of every 100,000 members of the population, the numbers sentenced to prison for their role in the war was 374 in Denmark, 419 in the Netherlands, 596 in Belgium, 633 in Norway, but only 94 in France (some 38,000 people). All estimates from Peter Novick, *The Resistance versus Vichy: The Purge of Collaborators in Liberated France* (Chatto and Windus, 1968), cited in Rigby, Ch. 2.

³⁴ On 26 May 2000, Sasa Maksimovic was sentenced to 13 years and 6 months' imprisonment for murder.

³⁵ At least 22 war crimes suspects have escaped from detention - the biggest single escape was of 14 suspects from the Mitrovica detention centre in September 2000. As of spring 2001, there were approximately 20 individuals in Kosovo indicted or under investigation for war crimes related offence, Only four of whom remained in detention. Plus there were a further approximately 10 individuals indicted for ethnically motivated murder or attempted murder. OSCE Department of Human Rights and Rule of Law, 1 September-28 February 2001.

³⁶ Rambouillet document, Ch. 1, Para 9.

³⁷ The Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms (Weekly report no. 542, 8-15 April 2001).

³⁸ The immediate post-war pattern was that Albanians accused of crimes against Serbs have been acquitted, while Serbs accused of crimes against Albanians were convicted on flimsy evidence. With the greater deployment of international judges and prosecutors, and with rigorous monitoring, this has improved. See above for factors militating against impartial trials.

³⁹ For example, the main argument of one witness was that the accused must have taken part in the particular crime because otherwise he would have been declared an enemy of his own people - and he had not been denounced as a traitor. Trial of Igor Simi_ as reported in OSCE Department of Human Rights and Rule of Law, *Kosovo: A Review of the Criminal Justice System* September 2000-February 2001.

⁴⁰ Whether or not any Serbs would accept such a "poisoned chalice" is another question.

⁴¹ See the Brahimi report, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, 17 August 2000.
http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations/

⁴² During my visit to Kosovo in May 2000, *Koha Ditore* carried a full page denunciation of the co-director of the multi-ethnic Radio Contact, Zvonko Tarle, a Croat from Dalmatia. Zvonko Tarle was well known in Kosovo, especially in media circles, and in Belgrade before the war as a voice for coexistence in Kosovo. His "offence" was that, after for several years writing articles critical of Belgrade, he had now denounced how Albanians were treating minorities in Kosovo, following a bomb attack on Radio Contact and harassment of its staff. *Koha Ditore* gave Tarle the right to reply, in which he argued that the denunciation was "not a newspaper article, but a warrant, an expulsion notice, locating the target for some future radicals". It seems that no Albanian saw a need to support Tarle, to denounce as nonsense the headline describing him as "Bearer of the idea of multi-ethnicity' in the service of Milo_evi_ propaganda". A full account of the exchange appears in IWPR Balkan Crisis Report No 140, 16 May 2000.

⁴³ *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 December 1999.

⁴⁴ Personal communication, USAID worker in Gjilan.

⁴⁵ The Rambouillet document envisaged the establishment of the office of Ombudsperson, but UNMIK's progress on this was extraordinarily slow. It was not until November 2000 that the office opened, understaffed and under-resourced.

⁴⁶ Not all municipalities have set up these committees, in several places their existence seems nominal, and in general it is unclear how they are functioning. OSCE eighth *Report on Ethnic Minorities*, para 41 (September 2001).

⁴⁷ See IWPR Balkan Crisis Report 141, 19 May 2000.

⁴⁸ IWPR Balkan Crisis Report 278, 7 September 2000.

⁴⁹ Reuters, 23 August 2001.

⁵⁰ OSCE, "Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo", March 2001 through August 2001, para 88.

⁵¹ Boban Petkovic from Rahovec, Kosovo, was arrested in Serbia in June 1999 for murdering three Kosovo Albanians. In July 2000, he was sentenced to four years and nine months - his plea in mitigation was that this had been in revenge for the NATO bombings. The Serbian police officer who gave him the gun was sentenced to one year. Three soldiers arrested in 1999 were sentenced to more than four years for the murder of an elderly Albanian couple. Although their trial revealed that they were part of a "trace-erasing unit" - that is, a unit with the task of covering up crimes (*Observer*, 22 April 2001) - the judge decided to be

lenient as he said they were suffering from "war psychosis". The trial was brought largely thanks to the private investigations of a Yugoslav army colonel. (*Washington Post*, 20 and 21 December 2000).

⁵² CNN, 2 June 2001.

⁵³ Associated Press, 24 April 2000; *New York Times*, 24 April 2000.

⁵⁴ At that time, this Committee was called the Coordinating Committee for Conflict Resolution Training in Europe. Its change of name signified a change from seeking to "multiply" the number of facilitators for conflict resolution training to support local activists in a variety of conflict transformation activities.

⁵⁵ Nina Pecnic and Paul Stubbs, "Croatia: from dependency to development", *The Rural Extension Bulletin*, No. 8, Dec. 1995, University of Reading, quoted by Judith Large, *The War Next Door: A study of second-track intervention during the war in ex-Yugoslavia* (Hawthorn Press, 1997), p. 150.

⁵⁶ Patrick J. Bracken and Celia Petty (eds), *Rethinking the Trauma of War* (Save the Children/Free Association Books), 1998. This book arose from a conference held in 1996.

⁵⁷ Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms Memorandum to the UN Committee on Human Rights, April 1992.

⁵⁸ For a full account, see Mertus, *Kosovo: How Myths and Truths Started a War*, p. 145.

⁵⁹ The two people concerned are Adem Demaçi and Hydajet Hyseni.

⁶⁰ On the blood feud campaign, see *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, pp. 60-64. On feminist work with rural women in Kosovo, see Julie Mertus, "Women in Kosovo: Contested Terrains - the role of national identity in shaping and challenging gender identity" in Sabine P. Ramet (ed.), *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), pp. 171-186.

⁶¹ The goal of UNMIK's "winterisation" programme for 1999-2000 was that each family group should have a weatherproof room in its dwelling. This meant it was common that more than 20 people were sleeping in the same room. The programme fell short of its goal, but with the provision of tents and thanks to the family solidarity among Kosovo Albanians, nobody died of hypothermia.

⁶² KAVAW, p. 100.

⁶³ Natale Losi, "Understanding the needs of the displaced: some elements on the Kosovo case" in *Psychosocial Notebook*, Vol 1, November 2000 "Psychosocial and Trauma Response in War-Torn Societies: the Case of Kosovo" (International Organization for Migration), p. 16.

⁶⁴ IOM Press Release, 24 October 2000. One criticism of the course, however, was that the international lecturers it drew on did not include anybody from other Yugoslav successor states.

⁶⁵ Jean/Marie Lemaire, "Disconcerting Humanitarian Interventions, and the resources of collective healing", Paper 8 to the IOM Seminar.

⁶⁶ See, for instance, the OSCE's seventh *Report on Ethnic Minorities*.

⁶⁷ OSCE Feature Stories, 27 February 2001 at http://www.osce.org/kosovo/feature_stories/files/story04.htm

⁶⁸ The international operation's cooperation with this women's network has by no means been a success story. Indeed, two prominent Kosovo Albanian feminists persuaded the US Senate to suspend funding from the UNHCR for four months because of the mismanagement of its US-funded Kosovo Women's Initiative. See *On the Record* Vol 10 Issue 7 (8 May 2000) and Vol 10 Issue 9 (7 August 2000), at <http://www.advocacy.net>

⁶⁹ AFP, 27 November 1999

⁷⁰ Some international agencies offered hairdressing courses with a similar rationale. This provoked some amusement as there seemed no relationship between the supply and demand for hairdressing: in one village some 60 women completed the course. Prishtina woman activist, May 2000.

⁷¹ AFP, 6 December 1999; *Daily Telegraph* available in "Electronic Telegraph", Issue 1636 (www.telegraph.co.uk), quoted in "Grass Roots Good News" email bulletin, June 2000. It might be significant that this was initiated by one of the international organisations with the longest track record in Kosovo.

⁷² Using Bosnians showed a willingness that is unfortunately rare to draw on expertise from within the region, It also introduced participants to non-oppressive Slavs, using a variant of a hated language, but offering useful skills and sharing a comparable experience.

⁷³ By June 2001, the IOM ICRS had supported more than 1,150 micro-projects, and "facilitated sustainable reintegration employment to more than 8,300 former combatants. In addition, 5,954 have received successful service referrals to companies" for employment. IOM Press Release, 21 June 2001.

⁷⁴ The early TMK trainings, organised in haste by the IOM, were inevitably improvised. When IOM invited the Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research (TFF) to discuss forgiveness, TFF trainer Peter Jarman found himself in Prishtina faced with giving a lecture to 100 trainees - not the most appropriate setting for exploring such a sensitive and emotive topic.

⁷⁵ Many regard the TMK as, in Tim Judah's words, "the KLA in mothballs" (Tim Judah, *War and Revenge in Kosovo*, Yale University Press, 2000, p.300), yet Bernard Kouchner, the first head of UNMIK, saw it as one of UNMIK's major contributions to demilitarising Kosovo.

⁷⁶ Perhaps an indication of the significance of local factors, including leadership, is that it is in Gjilan too that the TMK has recruited its first three Serb trainees, who joined in April 2001.

⁷⁷ *The Forum*, special edition in English, November 2000.

⁷⁸ Ironically, a number of them, like Clinton himself, had set the tone for indiscriminate reprisals by giving their approval to a campaign of aerial bombardment that found it legitimate to bomb non-military Serbian targets as far away as Vojvodina.

⁷⁹ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Doubleday Anchor 1959), p. 213

⁸⁰ *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 June 1999

⁸¹ General Agim Çeku (now head of the Protection Corps) and Hashim Thaçi (former UÇK leader, now head of the Democratic Party, PDK)

⁸² Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Balkan Report, Vol. 4, No. 45, 16 June 2000

⁸³ Belgrade Women in Black report, 3 November 2000.

⁸⁴ Reuters, 4 November 2000. In Prishtina Brovina resumed her work with the Centre for the Rehabilitation of Mothers and Children. She stood in the Kosovo general elections as the presidential candidate of Hashim Thaçi's "Democratic Party", writing a pre-election appeal to Serbs to join in building the new Kosovo. *New York Times*, 31 October 2001.

⁸⁵ Balkan Peace Team, June 2000.

⁸⁶ *Koha Ditore*, 20 August 2000.

⁸⁷ See Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, pp. 60-64.

⁸⁸ Reuters, 11 May 2001.

⁸⁹ The flag used by Kosovo Albanians has generally been the flag of Albania and so, in the Communist era, carried a star that has now been dropped in both Albania and Kosovo.

⁹⁰ See Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, especially Chapters 3 and 6.

⁹¹ In March 2001, I met a representative of Nezavisnost and of the Kosovo independent trade union federation in Madrid in the course of a combined speaking tour.

⁹² Personal interview, May 2000. Allegations in the Serbian press that Albanians have trashed Serbian books in the library system were not borne out by a mission of investigation by international librarians. Carsten Frederiksen and Frode Baken, "Libraries in Kosovo/Kosova: a general assessment and a short and medium-term development plan - report of a mission undertaken on behalf of UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE)". <http://www.faife.dk> or press release at <http://www.ifla.org/V/press/pr000310.htm> Whatever the objective evidence of books on shelves, as long as it is unsafe for Serbs to visit libraries, they are likely to believe the denunciations.

⁹³ The Serb librarian based in northern Mitrovica, escorted by international librarians and KFOR, visited the central library and refuted sensational stories in the Serbian press about the destruction of Serbian books. This set the path for a joint project of cooperation in which the French component of the Balkan Peace Team is now involved.

⁹⁴ See *On the Record Kosovo*, Vol 10, Issue 3/1 (April 2000) at <http://www.advocacy.net>.

⁹⁵ See Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, pp. 170-171.

⁹⁶ The hostility of the Serbian communities to Serb recruits to the Kosovo Police Service has taken the form of stoning the bus taking them to the police school and beating up two off-duty police officers in Mitrovica.

⁹⁷ The insignia is based on the Maltese Cross, worn by the knights of Malta during the Crusades when they functioned as a "rescue unit". The Fire Department entered a team of four Albanians and two Serbs in the World Extrication Championships, where they outperformed teams from Spain, Scotland, South Africa and Zimbabwe. UNMIK Press Briefing, 21 June 2001.

⁹⁸ According to reports from recently released prisoners such as Miroslav Filipovic, IWPR Balkan Crisis Report No 194, Part 2, 13 November 2000, and Flora Brovina, quoted in AIM, 18 November 2000. Earlier, Amnesty International saw an opportunity for bridge-building in promoting the joint demand for the release of Kosovo Albanian prisoners in Serbia and an amnesty in Serbia for war resisters. Sonja Nikolic, the Serb co-director of Prishtina's multi-ethnic Radio Contact, complained to me in May 2000 that no Kosovo Albanian media had been interested in talking with Albanians released from Ni_ prison about the links they had formed there with Serbian war resisters.

⁹⁹ In the 1980s, several Kosovo Albanians were shown as having "official" biographies that were impossible. Kjell Magnusson, "The Serbian Reaction: Kosovo and Ethnic Mobilization Among Serbs", *Nordic Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, Vol 4:3 (1987), p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ James C. Scott's suggestive term in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale University Press, 1990).

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Du_an Janjic, "Can the War be Stopped and Yugoslavia Survive?" in Tonci Kuzmanic and Arno Truger (eds), *Yugoslavia War* (Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution Schlaining/Peace Institute Ljubljana, 1992).

¹⁰² Colin Soloway, IWPR Balkan Crisis Report 215, 6 February 2001.

¹⁰³ Balkan Peace Team Monthly Report, June 2000.

¹⁰⁴ An anthropologist who researched Kosovo in the late 1980s observed that they "cope with marginality by cultivating their identity as oppressed and suffering 'outsiders'. *Vuajtje*, suffering, is considered a fact of life ... They identify themselves as a backward, forgotten, plundered people, characteristics which they feel make them special". Janet Reineck, *The Past as a Refuge: Gender, Migration and Ideology among Kosovo Albanians* (unpublished Ph. D dissertation, Berkeley: University of California, 1991), p.193.

¹⁰⁵ This becomes apparent even reading a thoughtful article on the contribution of psychosocial recovery in the process of reconciliation by Kimberly Maynard. In the five-phase schema of recovery that she proposes, it is only in phase four that the victim is ready to "re-establish a personal and social morality". Kimberly A. Maynard, "Rebuilding Community: Psychosocial Healing, Reintegration, and Reconciliation at the Grassroots Level", in Krishna Kumar (ed), *Rebuilding Societies After Civil War: Critical roles for International Assistance* (Lynne Rienner, 1997), pp. 203-225. The five phases are: 1. Establishing safety; 2. Communalization and bereavement; 3. Rebuilding trust and the capacity trust, 4. Reestablishing personal and social morality; 5. Reintegrating and restoring democratic discourse.

¹⁰⁶ AFP, 21 October 2000.

¹⁰⁷ Confidential workshop reports.

¹⁰⁸ One is *Forum*, where "Irina" emails from Belgrade and talks about her father (whose own mother was Albanian) trying to stay on in Prishtina, but ultimately abandoning hope. The other is in Muhammed Kullashi's article in *Kosova and Balkan Observer* Year 1, No 1 (March 2001). One of the leaders in Serb-Albanian dialogue around 1989, Kullashi went into exile in France. After the war he visited a number of former contacts, including one Serb living in Belgrade.

¹⁰⁹ Sources for the stories referred to are *New York Times*, 25 April 1999; Balkan Peace Team Monthly Report, June 2000, *Associated Press*, 11 June 2000, *The Independent*, 4 July 1999; and Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge*, p. 245.

¹¹⁰ A story later matched when an Albanian intervened to protect a Serb from an angry Albanian crowd. "In one of such attacks, a woman who stood by unable to do anything, according to her own words, asked later a young man who had participated in this act: 'Do you feel better now?' and he answered: 'I don't, but I could not resist hitting him a few times myself'. Recently an Albanian was killed when he tried to prevent one of these groups from attacking two women of Serb ethnic origin." *AIM*, 6 September 1999.

¹¹¹ Of the 932 abductions reported by the Humanitarian Law Centre, 141 ended with the UÇK "police" releasing the person concerned, and a further 13 with them being set free from KFOR. Several of the 24 people who escaped from UÇK "prisons" were helped by Albanians, including UÇK members acting against the dominant attitude among their comrades. As well as documenting torture and rape, this report also contains examples of Albanians collecting large sums of money on the false pretence of securing somebody's release.